6-25-2002

Towards An Understanding of Church Social Work Practice

Luann K. Hanson

TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF CHURCH SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE.

LUANN KAY HANSON

Submitted in partial fulfuillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Social Work
Augsburg College
2002

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
AUGSBURG COLLEGE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Master's Thesis of:

Lu Ann Hanson

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the Master of Social Work Degree.

Date of Oral Presentation: June 25, 2002

Thesis Committee:

[signature], Ph.D.
Thesis Advisor

Curt Paulsen, Ph.D.
Thesis Reader

[signature] LICSW
Thesis Reader

Abstract

Towards an understanding of church social work practice.

A qualitative, grounded theory field study

to explore the present role of church social work practice.

LuAnn Kay Hanson

June, 2002

Four social workers, employed by Lutheran churches in the Twin Cities area, were interviewed using an interview guide. The outcomes of the interviews are discussed. Out of these interviews, and the literature review, an understanding of church social work practice, roles, and models used arose.

Analysis revealed that the role of social workers in church-related employment was defined by several factors, which in turn shaped job satisfaction and the types of models used in their ministry. Similarities were seen between all the church social workers interviewed and their desire to approach clients wholistically. However, the environment and the vision of each church played a large part in how their role was defined. The types of models actively used came as a result of role definition.

These findings are significant for professional social work in a couple areas. On the level of direct micro practice there is a need to educate local pastors to consider expanding the possibilities of employment for social workers in the church. On the level of macro practice, training in social work education for the treatment of religious belief systems would encourage greater employment of social workers in local churches.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people to whom I am indebted for their help and encouragement.

The wisdom of my professors, while attending the social work program at Augsburg, has contributed to my intellectual growth as a person. Without their input, I would not have been able to refine my thinking to develop the ideas needed for this thesis. I cannot thank them enough for the wonderful education I received while at Augsburg.

A special word of thanks goes to: Dr. Sharon Patten for her insightful editing and encouragement to "just get it done," Dr. Laura Boisen for her relaxed style and sense of humor, Dr. Maryann Syers for her insistence on understanding theory, and Dr. Sumin Hsieh for her patience with our cohort as the last, and somewhat independent, group to do a required thesis. Thank-you also goes to my readers: Dr. Paulsen for his love of dialectics and circular causality, and my supervisor at Relate Counseling Center, Warren Watson LICSW, under whose guidance, I have been stretched.

My dear cohorts: Allie, Liz, and Gen – you have been an inspiration to me in many ways, I will miss you. I also want to thank the many "Ethnic Summit friends" who spent nights at our house offering encouragement and advice while listening to my frustrations: Rod, Dave, Nick and Ken. My dear sister Lorie, who volunteered to read and edit this thesis and offered valuable insight. Our friend Dr. Gene Boe, Professor of theology at the LB Seminary for his insight, and countless other people at church, who supported me with prayer, humor and - by just letting me be – Thank-you.

Last, but not least, I want to thank my husband. Through all the pain of these last three years you have been there. You helped out in *countless* ways, put up with my roller-coaster emotions, and helped with endless editing. I love you.

The fall of 2001 when our 17 year-old son, Jacob died in a tragic car accident, many of these people supported me. How could I have made it without you? How blest am I.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

V. RESULTS

A. Descriptive Findings ... ...

Selected References ... ...

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, grounded theory field study was to explore the role of church-based social workers as service providers through the church. This study sought to develop grounded theory that explains how social workers define their role as professionals in the church. It will: 1) Explore how church social workers view their position and connection to the church. 2) Examine the nature of the experiences church social workers have in their role. 3) Discover what models church social workers use in their work. Professional social workers, that are also people of faith, can be key in bringing people in need and people of faith together (Sherman, 2000). It was this researcher's hypothesis that churches could develop a more effective and wholistic outreach ministry through using professional social workers to develop programming.

The value of this study is to: enable churches to realize their greater potential to reach the needy, by utilizing the unique set of knowledge and skills social work practice offers, to awaken social workers to their value in helping the mission of the church, and to encourage schools of social work to began equipping social workers for this task.

Background of the Problem

Almost all-modern social work in America can be traced back to its roots in religion, especially that of the Christian church, though some suggest that there is no link between social work and religion. Though it is true that one cannot generalize from one religion to another, or from one denomination to another. It is also true that the manner in which churches approach its work with the poor will vary according to its theological framework. Each church makes different demands on their followers, depending on its

theological framework. These differences impact the work it carries out in its communities and the role the church assumes in social reform (Abbott, et al., 1990; Garland, 1992; Lowenberg, 1989; Manthey, 1989; Thomas, 1967). In order to understand the relationship of the church and social work today, we must look back to some important historical developments, starting with the sixteenth century (Lowenberg, 1989).

Sixteenth-century reformers, Luther and Calvin, insisted that not only the human heart, but society itself must be reformed in accordance with God's word. Though each reformer held differing views on important doctrinal issues, such as free-will and pre-destination, they both believed that self-sacrifice for the sake of others was an outgrowth of faith in the self-sacrificing love of Christ (Shelly, 1995; Troeltsch, 1949).

Martin Luther believed that the power of the spoken Word and the administration of the sacraments would change society without much additional effort (Pittman-Munke, 1999; Shelly, 1995). Therefore, most of the social work done historically by the Lutheran church was institutional; they built hospitals, homes for the aged, and children's homes. These institutions enabled them to visit people in need on a regular basis and gave them opportunity to administer the sacraments and preach the Word. Likewise, Lutheranism in America throughout most of the twentieth century, was concerned mainly with individual transformation imparted through the preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments (Pittman-Munk, 1999).

John Calvin had a different theological approach than that of Luther. He believed that Christians should be about creating the kingdom of God on earth and expected that they work hard to live up to what he felt God expected of them (Pittman-Munke, 1999; Shelly, 1995). Therefore, in the early twentieth century, much relief work was done by

Calvinist Christians, who addressed any need they encountered while evangelizing such as: cleaning houses, starting nurseries, giving out loans, or dealing with social action issues focusing on housing, delinquency, court reforms, child labor and workman's compensation (Thomas, 1967; Mangusson, 1977).

The secularization of social work took place at the turn of the twentieth century. Since that time, the church and state have been at odds. However, the needs of our communities continue to beckon, and the church needs to willingly join with secular institutions to care for the poor. In their study of three mega churches involved in social ministry, Thorburghs and Wofers (2000) point out the importance of linking service activities with congregational mission and philosophy. No other group can provide relationships and hope for the poor and needy like our churches (Carlson, 2001).

With the Welfare Reform Act of 1996, the United States "ended welfare as we know it" (Clinton, 1966) with the purpose of making welfare recipients independent. "Charitable Choice" (section 104 of H.R. 3734) was incorporated into this reform with its intent to move faith-based groups into collaborative efforts with the government (Sherman, 1996). According to research done by Sherman (1996), new cooperative relationships between government and faith-based institutions now exist in at least 23 states, with Minnesota listed among them.

Though the church historically has had an awareness of its mission to the needy, they stand in need of finding new and better ways to care. Social workers have the expertise and training needed to help, but may lack the opportunities needed to proceed. Together, the church and social work could join to carry out effective community service

and define a philosophy and model for outreach ministry (Carlson, 2001; Smith & Sebesta, 1982).

Definition of Terms

Not all social workers employed by religious organizations work for the local church and not all churches hire professional social workers to do community outreach. However, the research in this study will focus exclusively on church-based social workers' employed by Mainline or Evangelical Protestant churches, or subsidiary foundation, on a full or part-time basis.

The term, "church social work" will be understood in three ways in the literature review and research: 1) work done by professionals such as clergy, who are committed to care for the needy; and 2) work by non-professional volunteers committed to scriptural truth, imploring individual Christians to care for the poor. In the research part of this thesis, church social work will be defined only as, 3) work done, or programs directed, by a licensed social worker within a church setting.

The following conceptual distinctions about denominationalism are necessary to make at the outset. Most of the major Mainline Protestant denominations flow from the leaders of the Reformation. "Lutheran churches" follow the teachings of Martin Luther, "Calvinistic churches" follow the teachings of John Calvin and are defined, most often as, Presbyterian, Dutch and German Reformed Churches, and many Baptists and Congregationalists.

After WWII, the "Age of Self" arose with an emphasis on psychology and a move from Mainline Protestants to a large Evangelical Protestant movement was derived from a number of new and distinct subgroups. Among them were militant right-wing religious

leaders and Pentecostals. "These Pentecostals, or charismatics as some preferred, included everything from Episcopalians and nearly a million Roman Catholics, to faith healers and assorted tent preachers" (Shelly, 1995, p. 431). These Evangelical Protestants were distant relatives of Anabaptists (desenters of the Reformation, who denied infant baptism, refused to bear arms, hold political office or take oaths) who believed in a clear separation of church and state.

The secularization of social work happened in the early 1900's. Secularization is understood as "a world disinterested in God. It does not seek to know or to do his will, and it recognizes no standards or values other than those supporting democracy or Marxism" (Shelly, 1995, p. 462).

The new age movement has brought a new awareness to spirituality and even Ellis (1993) referred to the significant improvements that spirituality brings as promoting more behavioral changes than most therapy. The term spirituality will be defined in this study as a relationship with a higher Power.

Potential Significance and Implications of this Study

In interviews with several social workers, Thomas (1967) relates talking with a medical social worker who said, "I would like to work in a church setting more than I can say, but where are the handles to take hold? Where does a person start" (p. 248)?

This study will help uncover and understand the perspectives of social workers that are employed by the church. It will: 1) Explore how church social workers view their position and connection to the church and community. 2) Examine the nature of the experiences church social workers have in their role. 3) Discover what models church social workers use in their work.

A greater understanding of the role social workers can play in the church, in outreach ministry is significant. Those social workers desiring to work in a church setting need a place to begin; this research may give them the handle they need to proceed. Churches that may wonder how a social worker could benefit their outreach in the community may find this study useful. Professors teaching, or preparing social work curriculum, desiring to equip social workers for such involvement may also find this research informative.

This research is important given the low rate of professional social workers employed by the church. The majority of social workers do not see the church as a possibility for employment, nor does the church view social workers as a useful part of their mission to the community. There is therefore, a need for research that looks at social workers employed by the church, to understand what issues they face and how they perceive their position. This study is an attempt to answer these questions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a minimal amount of empirical literature dealing with the role of the professional social worker in the church. The historical literature points to the undeniable fact that social work originated from a Judeo-Christian heritage. However, since the secularization of social work in the early 1900's, most of the focus in social work has been on the secular. Sources promoting faith-based services within congregations have been published in the last five to seven years (Carlson, 2001; Garland, 2002; Jones, 1998; Jonker & Koopman, 2000; Ressler, 1998; Sherman, 2000 & 1996). Many of the sources used in this study are recent articles discussing social outreach in the church. It should be noted that most churches cited do not employ social workers.

The literature review section examined the literature under four broad themes. First, the history of church social work in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Second, church social work as understood historically from the Mainline Protestant tradition, which is, traced back to the Reformation of the sixteenth century under the leadership of Martin Luther and John Calvin. Thirdly, the secularization of social work in the early 1900's, and the return to "spirituality" in the twenty-first century, with new opportunities for faith-based initiatives resulting from the 1996 welfare law changes. Lastly, the literature review will examine models presently used by various Mainline Protestant and Evangelical Protestant churches to deliver outreach services.

Judeo-Christian Heritage of Church Social Work

Historically social work originated from the Christian faith with Jewish, Protestant and Catholic thinking as the basis of professional practice (Tirrito, 2000). Johnson (1941) calls the church the, "Mother of social work" (p. 404). However, social

work as a profession did not appear on the scene until the1800's (Franklin, 1998; Trattner, 1994), but the Judeo-Christian traditions spoke of caring for the needy, centuries before. In order to understand the present, we must understand the past. "One cannot understand current efforts to help the needy without first comprehending the foundations on which they were built" (Trattner, 1994, p.1). Hugen (1998) says:

> Out of ancient Israel's concern for justice and mercy toward the sick, the poor, the orphaned, the widowed – from Micah and Hosea, Jeremiah and Isaiah – grew the compassion of Jesus and the devotion of Paul. The justice and love of God set forth and exemplified in the Judeo-Christian tradition has given drive and direction to much of western cultures charities. (p. 2)

Professional social work clearly evolved from the church and its ministries; in fact the Bible refers to caring for all ages and needs, " Even to your old age and gray hairs, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you. I will sustain you and I will rescue you" (Is. 46:4). Scripture also has numerous references to God's love for the poor. He exhorts people not to neglect the oppressed, but to work for justice towards them and show them kindness. One of the strongest passages is found in the Old Testament book of Isaiah:

> The kinds of fasting I want is this; Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear, and do not refuse to help your own relatives. Then my favor will shine on you like the morning sun, and your wounds will be quickly healed. I will always be with you to save you; my presence will protect you on every side. When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond. I will put an end to oppression, to every gesture of contempt, and to every evil word; if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon and I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never goes dry. Your people will rebuild what has long been in ruins, building

> again on the old foundations. You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, who restored the ruined houses. (Is. 58: 6-12)

The church has historically followed this mandate, opposing poverty, housing the sick, the old, the disabled, providing food and shelter and working to eliminate injustice and oppression (Netting, 1984).

It seems clear from historical evidence, that twentieth century social reform was influenced by our Judeo-Christian heritage and, in part, by sixteenth century reformers (Shelly, 1995; Tirrito, 2000; Troeltsch, 1949). We will begin by looking at the sixteenth century reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin.

Sixteenth Century Reformers

Since the embryonic birth of the church in Jerusalem it had been increasing in size and power. During the time of the Holy Roman Empire, the church gained in power and was able to assert her authority over non-religious civilization becoming both powerful and corrupt. In the sixteenth century "The spirit of reform broke out with surprising intensity, giving birth to Protestantism and shattering the papal leadership of western Christendom" (Shelly, 1995, p.235). There were intense and bloody struggles between the Protestants and Catholics, and Europe suffered under the dregs of war, until at last "western Christendom was permanently divided, and a few pioneers pointed toward a new way: the denominational concept of the church (Shelly, 1995, p. 235).

This period of church history we call The Reformation (1517-1648), had a great impact on the modern institution of social welfare. Protestant reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin in sixteenth-century Europe, were pioneers for reform of both church and society. Their theology affects the world even today (Shelly, 1995; Tirrito, 2000; Troeltsch, 1949;).

Luther, pietism, inner mission movement.

Martin Luther was born in 1483, the son of a Saxon coal miner. Luther was planning to become a lawyer till a bolt of lightening knocked him to the ground. Because of deep-seated superstitions common to that era about such events, he was terrified of evil spirits and quickly said, "I'll become a monk." He kept his vow and in the priesthood, as a troubled monk, began a study of Scripture. Luther was the first reformer to struggle with the basic presumptions of Mainline Protestantism: (1) How is a person saved? (2) What is the church? (3) Where does religious authority lie? And (4) What is the essence of Christian living? (Shelly, 1995; Troeltsch, 1949).

Martin Luther's key truth was, "the just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17), this answered the question, how a person is saved. To answer where religious authority lie he said, "not in the visible institution called the Roman church but in the Word of God found in the Bible." To the question, what is the church, he replied: "The whole community of Christian believers, since all are priests before God." To the question concerning the essence of Christian living he said: "to serve God in any useful calling, whether ordained or lay" (Shelly, 1995, p. 246). Luther's 95 theses, posted on the Wittenberg, Germany church door for debate in 1517, were the beginning of his excommunication from the Roman church. In his theses he criticized the Catholic Church (among other things) for claiming that indulgences could buy a soul out of purgatory and into heaven. Luther also spoke for the right of common man to read Scripture and translated the Latin Bible into German (Shelly, 1995).

The American Lutheran church felt Luther's influence on it, but several other movements also affected its formation: pietism, the Inner Mission Movement,

immigration and the geographical settlement of Germans and Scandinavians. Pittman-Munke (1999) contends that these influences on the Lutheran community made their ministry focus distinct from the Calvinistic movement.

Martin Luther's theology rested not on human efforts, but on God's actions and faith in what God through Jesus Christ had done. Good works came as a result of God's acceptance of the individual as perfect in Christ (justification). Letts (1957) says, "Luther saw good works as an expression of gratitude which life in union with Christ made possible" (Letts, 1957, as cited in Pittmunk-Munke 1999).

Luther believed in the doctrine of two kingdoms, which differentiated between the role of the state and the church. The state was responsible for justice and maintaining order, and the church was to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. Luther believed that through preaching the church did its part in society by transforming individuals, but it should not get involved with politics or over-involved with social issues. However, individual Lutherans were free to be involved with social reform, as they desired (Carlson 1946; Pittman-Munke, 1999; Troeltsch, 1949).

Pietism called for an active faith and was a reaction to formalism and intellectualism. The rise of pietism came as a result of several German Lutheran. Jacob Spener (1635-1705) was one of the leaders for pietism, which emphasized the practical side of Christianity, resulting in a spirit of love coupled with an emphasis on the priesthood of all believers. His teaching affected work done by Lutherans to relieve individual social distress. However, Pittman-Munke (1999) notes, "Spener did not challenge the doctrine of the two kingdoms; in fact, he carefully avoided political issues" (p. 44).

German pietism is closely related to two other movements, Methodism and the American Great Awakening. Both of these national movements affected the awareness of the middle class to the needs of the poor and through the movement of pietism as a whole, came a sense of duty to the weak, the aged and the deserving poor. Therefore, pietism affected not only the Lutheran church, but all Evangelical Protestant churches (Pittman-Munke, 1999).

The Inner Mission movement was an outgrowth of pietism and became a term used for all "works of saving love" (Pittman-Munke, 1999, p. 48). Much was accomplished through the movement of the Inner Mission. Born in Germany in the 1800's, the Inner Mission movement set models for deaconesses, nursing, the care of the homeless, prison reform and the care of the mentally challenged. This concept was born out of Luther's theology of social responsibility for one's neighbor and was directed at the individual.

In America, Stuckenberg (1835-1903) was the product of the Inner Mission movement during the time period after the Civil War. In 1880, he published *Christian Sociology*, which linked Christian ethics and human problems with Christian love as the source of social ethics (Pittman-Munke, 1999). Stuckenberg's version of Christian sociology offered Christian solutions for social problems. Using the ethics of the New Testament as a guide for developing social theories, "He felt that the teachings of Christ were adaptable to the needs of humanity" (Stuckenberg, as cited in Munke 1999, p. 51).

American Lutheranism from the late eighteenth century throughout the early twentieth century was mainly concerned with individual transformation and salvation. It

was felt that societal transformation would come as a result of personal change (Pittman-Munke, 1999).

Luther's early twentieth century followers.

After some unification among Scandinavian and German Lutheran bodies in America, numerous inner mission works were started by church bodies or private associations of pastors and lay people. Pittman-Munk (1999) noted that, Lutheranism was unique among other Protestant works because the clergy were strong in leading and dealing with social issues, usually outside the churches formal structure. Between 1890 and 1917 there were eight children's homes, 21 hospitals, and 14 homes for the elderly.

Often city pastors in the Norwegian church also served as chaplains, and became involved with relief work in the spirit of inner mission doctrine. Pastor Otto Juul was a city missionary in Minneapolis from 1916-1917; he gives a description of his work, which covered an eight-month period:

> ...I had visited the hospitals 101 times, and shared the work of God with about 800 patients; in addition I have made 80 house calls in carrying out my duties. I have been present in children's court once or twice a week, have frequently visited the jails and various charitable and disciplinary institutions in and around the Twin Cities and have been of some assistance in procuring work for several people. (Juul, as cited in Pittman-Munke, 1999, p. 52)

Other city missions were established in Chicago, Brooklyn, New York, San Francisco & Seattle. The United Lutheran Church had elaborate social services, resembling the settlements, they offered a multiplicity of services: day camps, summer camp, industrial missions, food & clothes, evangelistic work, employment assistance, youth work and rescue missions (Pittman-Munke, 1999).

The Reverend William Passavant (1821-1894) was considered the most influential American Lutheran "inner missionary," he is credited with establishing the largest number of orphanages, hospitals, homes for the aged and other institutions of mercy among Lutherans in North America. His church body was the General Council Lutheran. All the inner mission work of Lutherans was not a part of the organic structure of the church, but was separate from it; therefore, finances were always a problem. Synods would occasionally endorse the work and the Missouri Synod lead the others in endorsing them.

Passavant's influence encouraged the Augustana Lutheran synod to begin charitable enterprises. Lutheran charities were seen as a means to an end, that end being the salvation of people's souls through the preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments (Pittman-Munke, 1999). Consequently, between 1865 and 1917, the Swedish Lutheran synod established seven hospitals, ten homes for the aged, fourteen child-care institutions, a home for the disabled, seven hospices, a child welfare agency and four seamen's centers. These facilities provided a place for the clergy to preach and administer the sacraments to the needy.

Summary.

The literature reviewed in this section reveals considerable attention, by some Lutheran synods, to social concerns. Though not as widespread as the Calvinistically influenced denominations, the Lutheran influence should not be ignored. As the Lutheran church grew, a few writers called attention to social ills and morality, attempting to encourage individual Lutheran Christians to become active in social reform (Pittman-Munke, 1999). However, very little was done by Lutheran synods to care for the needs of

the individual poor, as they focused on institutional work: building hospitals, homes for the aging and creating hospice centers to meet the needs of the community.

The General Synod, Augustana Synod, United Norwegian and Hauge Norwegian Synod all called for legislation to support moral reform of drinking. The Norwegian and Hauge Synods concerned themselves with Sabbath day reform and charity to immigrants. Clergy and lay leaders worked in city missions, outside the auspices of the church, visiting jails, hospitals and helping the poor (Pittman-Munke, 1999). Part of the reason for the lack of united concern for societal issues, between 1889 – 1920 had to do with the formation of the church. Lutherans were mostly rural and busy dealing with difficult immigration issues. Also, many Lutheran kept their native language well into the twentieth century and this limited readership of their publications. Because a high percentage of Lutherans were rural immigrants, they were quite conservative. Finally the doctrine of the two kingdoms kept Lutherans uninvolved in society for a time (Pittman-Munke, 1999).

Calvin, capitalism and its mission to the world.

John Calvin (1509-1564) was born a generation after Luther, in a small town sixty miles from Paris. His father believed that his son should have a good education, so John went to the University of Paris and obtained a Master of Arts degree. He than went to study law (at his father's insistence) at the Universities of Orleans and Bourges. When his father died he was free to do as he pleased, and he went back to Paris as a student of the classics. During his time there he was influenced by the ideas of the Reformation. Recognizing the supreme authority of Scripture he surrendered to God, gave up his career as a classical scholar and identified with the Protestant cause in France.

While in France, he published an exposition of Protestant doctrine of the Reformation (1536), and it stands as the clearest and most readable work of Christian truth. As a preface to this book he wrote a letter to Francis I, King of France defending Protestants and calling for a respectful hearing for the Protestants in France. With that letter Calvin assumed a position of leadership in the Protestant cause because no one had ever spoken so effectively on their behalf. However, it soon became unsafe for Calvin to stay in France and he moved to Geneva.

The city council in Geneva offered Calvin a position as, "Professor of Sacred Scriptures." He accepted this position and demanded that everyone in Geneva accept his prepared confession of faith in order to become a citizen. He also developed a comprehensive educational program and demanded excommunication and expulsion from the Lord's Supper, for those whose lives did not match up to a certain set of spiritual standards such as not attending Sabbath worship, drinking, adultery, gambling, and dancing (Shelly, 1995). Thus Geneva became the home of Calvinism.

Calvin was a lawyer and a scholar with a turbulent public ministry in a flourishing business community. Calvin felt strongly about the benefits of industry and trade. Therefore, with the aid of a State loan, Calvin started an industry to manufacture cloth and velvet; this gave the poor and unemployed in Geneva a livelihood. When the cloth industry began to waver, he introduced the manufacturing of watches (Troeltsch, 1949). The industry created in Geneva became the seedbed for introducing Capitalism into the Calvinistic work ethic worldwide. Calvin believed that labor was necessary, idle hands were evil, and profit was a sign of the blessings of God on the elect (those predestined to salvation). Calvin's' view of God also implied a particular style of social duty to show

evidence of election (Pittman-Munke, 1999). Even though profit was allowed, it was to be shared with those in need and church deacons were called on to organize and distribute voluntary gifts. Calvin's emphasis on philanthropy affects charitable giving in modern time, even today people who do not care much for organized religion will give large sums of money to charity (Troeltsch, 1949; Shelly, 1995, p. 257).

There are other distinctive factors in Calvinistic thinking affecting outreach efforts. Calvinism teaches that those who are predestined to be saved cannot fall away from the grace of God and therefore they hold a high value of their personhood. Troeltsch (1949) says,

> The Calvinist is filled with a deep consciousness of his own value as a person, with the high sense of a Divine mission to the world, of being mercifully privileged among thousands, and in possession of an immeasurable responsibility. This idea of personality, however, which arises out of the idea of predestination must not be confused with modern individualistic and democratic ideas. Predestination means that the minority, consisting of the best and the holiest souls, is called to bear rule over the majority of mankind, who are sinners." (p. 617-618)

This high value of their personhood caused followers to go out into the "highways and byways" as the chosen people of God, to rescue other hurting and fallen people. While Calvin did not say absolutely who the elect were, he had three guidelines by which to identify them: participating in baptism and the Lord's supper; public profession of faith; and an upright moral life (Shelly, 1995).

Calvin believed that the church was not subject to secular government, except in secular matters and felt the church had an obligation to guide secular authorities in spiritual matters. He therefore encouraged representative assemblies and prompted democracy. Because Calvin did not consider the state supreme, as Luther did, he encouraged separation of church and state and believed the church was subject to secular

government. However, he also felt strongly that the church had an obligation to guide the state in spiritual matters (Shelly, 1995).

Calvin demanded much of himself and much of others. Calvin's key text was, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Therefore, Calvin strove to remake the kingdom of God on earth by pursuing moral righteousness, believing that good character was a fundamental sign of a truly Christian life. Calvin believed that no man is justified by faith without works, therefore; his life and the life of his followers was full of "dynamic, social activism" (Shelly, 1995, p. 261).

Calvin's early twentieth century followers.

In the early 1900's, American cities were bursting at the seams with new immigrants; housing, sanitary conditions and wages were desperate problems. People had dreams to get ahead, but no opportunity to do so. Settlement workers and charity workers sought to improve conditions for immigrants. Both workers felt that it was not the fault of the individual, but the social and economic conditions that kept them poor. Various groups, working in the city slums carried out Calvin's dynamic social activism: The Salvation Army, Volunteers of America, The Christian Missionary Alliance churches, and other city rescue missions (Calvinistic in theology) sprung up to meet the needs of those living in the slums. These Christians started ministries to the slums because of their concern for people's souls, but they soon developed a variety of social service programs to meet basic human needs. City missions, founded by gospel welfare organizations, were some of the early forerunners of social work today. The workers in city missions were often salaried clergy or urban middle-class women who doubled as volunteers and employees (Magnuson, 1977).

Most literature does not mention the social contributions of these gospel welfare organizations. Magnuson (1977) indicates that part of the reason may be that their publications were not available to scholars and could only be researched at the Library of Congress. These publications were The Christian Herald, Florence Crittenten Magazine, Volunteers Gazette, Living Truths, Triumphs of Faith, War Cry and Word, Work and World. Magnuson (1977) gleaned information, from these early 1900's publications, about Christian groups and individuals who addressed the problems of hunger, homelessness, unemployment, alcoholism, orphans, prisoners and their families, widows and children, slavery, inequality of genders, low wages, prostitution, immigrants and wife abuse. Each day volunteers would dedicate at least three hours looking for people in need and meeting those needs in any way they could. When The Salvation Army workers (called Salvationists) encountered infants and children left alone by their mothers, because those mothers were forced to work or starve; the workers began a nursery. Whatever these slum workers came up against they tackled; often they would: clean dirty houses, change sick babies, exchange good used clothing for the rags people were wearing, or make porridge for the sick (Magnuson, 1977; Manthey, 1989).

Love was the motto and the motivation central in all literature. Booth, founder of The Salvation Army said, "Every quality of our glorious religion can be resolved into one principle, and that is love." Emma Booth-Tucker called on Salvationists to be a "people of a large and tender heart" (Magnuson, 1977, p. 39). The leaders in these agencies always used the Bible in defense of their social programs, with their publications often showing a picture of Christ helping someone with a physical need. Such openness and

identification with the poor came from close personal contact with the slum dwellers (Magnuson, 1977).

Magnuson (1977) cites impressive numbers of people served by various Calvinistic social agencies. One day, in the winter of 1892, Stephen Merrits's "Travelers Club" for the unemployed served 2,000 men breakfast beginning at 4:30 a.m., turning no one away. The Christian Herald served 800,000 meals in one month in 1894. The "Bread Line" operated by the Bowery Mission served 129,000 breakfasts during the winter of 1905. Blizzards, floods, hurricanes and other natural disasters required temporary food and shelter, which the Salvation Army provided without blinking an eye. Holiday meals and gifts for Christmas became a regular and large part of what The Salvation Army provided. By 1896 they were helping 125,000 children every Christmas. Fresh-air programs in the summertime provided a unique way for children to get out of the slums for a day, sometimes for as long as ten days. City officials also backed this fresh–air programs and participated in Christmas festivities as well. Montlawn, New York a two-acre estate by the Hudson was donated for The Salvation Army's use, while others would volunteer automobiles or free boat rides, for outings. In September of 1894, Montlawn received its 1000th child, by 1913 Montlawn had hosted 40,000 children. The expenses mounted for The Salvation Army during those years (1902-1904), receipts for The Salvation Army exceeded expenses by more than $11,000, and when the *Christian Herald* appealed for donations, thousands of Christians responded (Magnuson, 1977).

Shelly (1995) mentions the effect of a Presbyterian & Congregational minister from New England in 1935. Rev. Lyman Beecher believed that Christians should be involved with the shaping of America, planting churches, schools, reforming morals and

working for just laws. This era became well known as the age of the "righteous empire," with many Calvinistic Protestants working for a Christian America. As forerunners of Evangelical Protestants, Calvinistic Christians from various denominations joined together to work for common concerns such as, temperance and observance of the Sabbath. These Christians also formed voluntary societies such as American Bible Society, American Educational Society, American Sunday School Union and a host of others (Magnuson, 1977; Manthey, 1989).

Summary.

The literature reviewed in this section clearly shows that by entering the slums to pursue evangelism, Calvinistic Christians gained an unparalleled understanding of the needy. When faced with these needs they responded with energy and growing sympathy. They learned firsthand that the rich were being held up by society and the poor were being downtrodden.

Their examples of providing, "in love" for the needs of people grew out of their religious experience, teaching and beliefs. Knowledge of the Reformers, and a Biblical understanding of love as practical helpfulness, was primarily responsible for the tremendous work that marked this movement. Action committees worked towards changing the social climate, addressing issues such as: housing, juvenile delinquency, court reforms, workman's compensation, and child labor laws. They felt social action was an important part of meeting the needs of the whole person and considered such action a responsibility to God. Sharing the wealth with which God had blessed them with was a mandate of the elect, as was introducing the kingdom of God on earth for the

purpose of developing moral character in newly evangelized Christians (Mangusson, 1977; Troeltsch, 1949; Thomas, 1967).

Secularization of Social Work

Many issues contributed to the rise of secularization. Charles Darwin's' book in 1859, *The Origin of Species* was a major reason for evangelicals to separate from the world. The effects of industrialism on society were immense; small towns became big cities almost overnight and many Christians wanted nothing to do with the sin of the slums. Immigrants brought new religious opinions that differed from Protestant Americans.

Other changes were occurring in some Christian circles. Higher criticism of the Bible: suggesting that Moses didn't author the first five books of the Bible, that Jesus was a deluded visionary and not the Son of God in the flesh, indicated a move to secular thought. The work of Karl Marx, *Das Kapital* organized nearly half of the world around his thinking. However, many church members, being wealthy capitalists, defended laissez faire philosophy. All these issues and more contributed to the eventual secularization of social work (Pittman-Munke 1999; Shelly, 1995).

The 1930's set a line of demarcation between the church and social work. Though in earlier times they were identified together, the church and social work separated and became antagonistic towards each other in the 30's (Thomas, 1967). Some Evangelical Protestants surrendered social concerns because, "Bible study and personal holiness seemed more rewarding than the reform of American Life" (Shelly, 1995, p. 433). The Second Coming of Christ gained in preeminence, with a concern for sanctification and the victorious Christian life received increased attention. Through this

"naval gazing" Evangelicals felt comforted, in a society where they were steadily losing control (Shelly, 1995).

The church in the early 1900's, which before had been at the center of community life, was now becoming just another institution among many and no longer acted as the representative of the community. Although social work was still looking to the church, the church was unable to give the organizational skills and leadership social work needed in a more complex society (Manthey, 1989; Thomas, 1967). Prior dependence on the goodwill of the Christian church was replaced with organizations that had specialized roles and defined knowledge of the problems. The church began to withdraw by focusing on spiritual growth, and social work continued to differentiate itself from religion, replacing it with science and psychology. Because Protestantism was not able to respond effectively to the complex social issues found in America, the church eventually lost their territory to the public sector (Manthey, 1989).

In the 50's and 60's social work was still objecting to religion having any involvement in social work. Biestek (1956) summarized well, the objections to religion having any involvement in social work.

> . . . Social work has adamantly shunned religion as a source of knowledge and values. Our profession seems to have a phobia of entering into any kind of positive relationship with religion. This remains one of the most controversial subjects in our profession. We have successfully avoided the controversy during the last two decades; our professional literature and conferences have kept an almost complete silence on the subject, giving the unfortunate impression that religion holds no interest for the social worker in his professional life, neither as an element in his philosophical framework nor as a possible resource in helping people. The objections to the liaison of religion and social work are easily identified:
>
> 1. Social work is social work; religion is religion. The two are incompatible, and the mixture is dangerous.

2. The introduction of religious values into the conceptual framework of social work would endanger the hard-won and fully validated social work principles and practices; it would make impossible the principle of client self-determination and the non-judgmental attitude. Moral standards would be imposed upon clients; they would be judged "worthy" or "unworthy".
3. The desire to link social work and religion in any way is a symptom of some unresolved, unconscious, and unprofessional need of the social worker.
4. The doctrinal conflicts existing between the various faiths would compound the professional conflicts already existing in social work. (p. 86-87)

It seems quite clear from Biestek's (1956) writing that discussing this subject publicly in the 50's was taboo. Social work had completely denied its Christian roots and clearly separated from it's "mother" (Johnson, 1941).

During this time of the secularization of culture, two groups gained in distinction: the Mainline Protestants emphasizing social Christianity, social gospel and social service; and the new Evangelical Protestants, emphasizing individual salvation with the promise of heaven but a transformation of the world in this life (Pittman-Munke, 1999).

Withdrawal of the church.

The Depression and World War II had a devastating impact on Christians both physically and morally, leaving them with neither the will nor the means to take on the world. People inside and outside the church thought of Christianity more narrowly as time went on. The church no longer was in the arena where crucial decisions were being made and they considered only what was obviously "spiritual," offering a very simplistic worldview (Shelly, 1995).

Niebuhr (1932) spoke of Mainline Protestantism as a whole and its contributions to the secularization of social work:

> The disunity of the church made secularization of social work imperative. There are enough limitations in a religiously inspired institutional charity to justify the conclusion that secularization is a desirable end . . .The church is the mother of organized charity, though a mother who has lost the loyalty of this, as of many of her other children. The anarchic disunity of Protestantism makes the secularization of social work inevitable, even if it were not desirable. (pp. 15-17)

Neibuhr (1932) cited several reasons why religious social work was displaced by secular social work: religion often was too spontaneous to be effective and not able to sufficiently question the social system or do a critical analysis and investigation. Too often churches used their generosity as a technique for power, control or prestige. They often regarded poverty as the fruit of evil living and viewed prosperity as a reward for virtue. Because of this middle class ideology, Protestantism was unable to look realistically into the social causes of poverty.

Church membership was growing faster than the general population in the early 1900's, at the same time interest in foreign missions was growing. By 1973, over 70 percent of Protestant missionaries and money for missions came from North America. Shelly says:

> Many of these missionaries took to the Third World, however, not only the gospel, but also their sacred/secular distinctions. They explained disease and disaster in terms of the natural law of cause and effect. They restricted the supernatural to a small area of human experience, and most of all, they said politics lay outside the realm of the religious life. As a result many leaders of the new nations considered Christianity irrelevant to practical life. (Shelly, 1995, p. 463)

The focus on foreign missions took Christians away from dealing with the practical problems in their own neighborhoods. This giving of tithes and sending missionaries to "heathen" lands left them feeling as though they were fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ, in every sense that was important (Shelly, 1995).

Difficult economic times.

The change in American economy during the Industrial Revolution and then the Great Depression greatly affected the secularization of social work. President Hoover offered solutions to the difficult economic times of the 20's and 30's, and initially was supported by social workers. In 1928 he ran for President and won, but his response to the economic collapse was woefully inadequate and social workers withdrew their support. Hoover was blind to the seriousness of the economic problems and felt they would soon pass. He strongly believed that private charity was adequate to help the poor, and did not agree that government should be involved in providing economic relief. President Hoover was willing to give $45 million to feed cattle in Arkansas, but yet would not approve the suggestion of Congress to give $25 million to farm families starving in Arkansas (Trattner, 1994). Because the Hoover administration would do nothing, 25 states set up agencies staffed by trained social workers. Many of these social workers were hired away from private charitable agencies to form the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (T.E.R.A.). The T.E.R.A. was very successful and later served as a model for Roosevelt's New Deal. Meanwhile Hoover and the Federal Government continued to do nothing.

> Instead, one member of the President's cabinet suggested that restaurant owners be urged to collect plate scraps and leftovers and place them in containers to be distributed to the "worthy" unemployed, perhaps a superfluous suggestion, as an item in a Chicago newspaper indicated: "Around the truck which was unloading garbage and other refuse were about thirty-five men, women, and children. As soon as the truck pulled away from the pile, all of them started digging with sticks, some with their hands, grabbing bits of food and vegetables." (Trattner, 1994, p. 281)

The Depression made it clear that churches offering voluntary charity would not be able to handle the mass unemployment and destitution alone. Reality hit and

Americans began to see the complexity of their society, realizing that solutions aimed at a local or individual level were not enough to address the problems (Manthey, 1989; Trattner, 1994). The Depression and the New Deal under President Roosevelt caused significant changes in the profession of social work. Because of the New Deal, the demand for social workers more than doubled in a decade, taking them away from churches and charities (Trattner, 1994; Carlson, 1999). This demand for workers also affected education and professionalism, with more emphasis being placed on curriculum and the need for field experience. As professionalism grew in the field of social work, the concerns of the church were left behind and Evangelical Protestantism was stereotyped by the public and social workers as, "close-minded, ignorant, belligerent, and separatistic" (Shelly, 1995; p. 437).

Summary.

From the literature reviewed in this section it is clear that the church's response to modernism and the socio-economic challenges of the early 1900's, failed on almost all levels: intellectually, organizationally, and methodologically.

Churches contributed to social work national conferences as late as 1911, when the National Conference of Charities and Corrections focused on the role of the church in relation to social work. However, American Protestantism was not able to respond effectively to the complex social issues and lost their territory to the public sector (Manthey, 1989). The church failed to change with the needs of the times, and did not consider the effects of urbanization, industrialization or how to use technological advances and mass communication to deal with the social issues of the day. They were

stereotyped as "close-minded, ignorant, belligerent, and separatistic" (Shelly, 1995, p. 437).

Social work desired a fuller professional status in the early 1900's and therefore pulled further away from religion and toward psychology, psychiatry and later to sociology, social psychology and cultural anthropology. Social workers began to understand individual personality issues in light of their social and cultural contexts, omitting the spiritual (Manthey, 1989; Thomas, 1967; Loewenberg, 1988).

Shift to Include Spirituality in Social Work

To understand the shift towards spirituality in social work in the late twentieth century, it is helpful to back up to the 70's. All through the 70's, public figures in sports, entertainment and politics spoke freely about faith in Christ (Shelly, 1995). Many Americans were surprised by this verbal witness, believing that to speak out was in bad taste and simpleminded. Evangelicals soon numbered 45 million in the United States and changed the face of American Protestantism. Though there were many Evangelical subgroups, all believed in what became known as, the born-again experience, or making a personal commitment to Christ.

In 1978, with the presidency of Jimmy Carter, his evangelical faith became a major issue in the campaign. Some Americans wanted morality in government but others said religion could divide the nation and had no place in a political campaign. Carter's presidency began to bring spirituality and social work closer together because of his humanitarian efforts and concern for human rights (Shelly, 1995).

Rebirth of spirituality in the 90's.

By the 1990's, over seventy-eight million Americans said they had "no religious preference" but defined themselves as "spiritually inclined and interested in spiritual things"(Shelly, 1995, p. 472). The media and the acceptance of psychology played a significant role in the way Americans looked at their inner life (Shelly, 1995).

Oprah Winfrey, a powerful talk show host, became one of the most influential American leaders. She exalted the importance of "spirituality," for millions, and the prominence of psychology with her involvement of Dr. Phil McGraw on her show. Taylor (2002) gives insight into this phenomenon.

> First, so-called secular Americans remain spiritually hungry. This may be because so much of our culture is secular. When someone like Oprah comes along and is open about spirituality, and in a winsome way, people are fascinated. Oprah's increased popularity when she became more publicly spiritual is just one evidence of this. (p. 45)

Social work was also been affected by culture, and starting in the 1990's an increasing amount of literature came out suggesting that spirituality and faith are important to client populations social workers serve. "After decades of neglect, the topic of spirituality has become increasingly popular to social work in recent years" (Ressler, 1998, p. 169). Hodge (2001) reports that, "several hundred studies exist on spirituality and religion, the majority of which suggest that spirituality is a key strength in personal well being" (p. 203). After being eliminated in 1970, the term "spirituality" has been added back into many social work textbooks. Even the revised, 1996 National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics has given religious diversity increased status. Social workers are encouraged to be sensitive to a persons' faith and are instructed, in the NASW Code of Ethics, to "obtain education about and seek to

understand the nature of social diversity and oppression related to religion as well as diverse groups" (1.05). They are also to "avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues" related to religion (2.01), to "not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination" on the basis of religion (4.02) and are required to "act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class" on the basis of religion (6.04). Reamer (1998) sums it up well by noting that religious diversity is of equal importance to other types of diversity.

Because of the rebirth of "spirituality," social workers are now encouraged to ask clients what they believe and enter into a discussion with them. It is now acceptable and encouraged to identify spirituality as a strength when assessing clients. This culture shift can be viewed in a positive light by the church and taken as an opportunity to offer needy clients the hope given in Scripture (Carlson, 2001; Derezotes, 2000; Garland, 1999; Hodge, 2001).

1996 welfare reform and charitable choice.

Our public policies have also made changes that re-open the door for the work of faith-based social work (Carlson, 2001).

For 60 years after the time of President Roosevelt, the New Deal and amendments to it remained policy. Then in 1996, "Welfare as we knew it" ended under a federal law called the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). TANF differs from AFDC, most importantly, because it limits lifetime use of welfare to five years (though states have freedom to decrease or increase this time). This timeline is regulated by individual states using federal

though participants need to began working after only two years (Economic Report of The President, 2001; Primus, 2001). The first group of welfare families will leave public assistance forever in 2002, each year after that thousands more families will be eliminated from the welfare rolls (Carlson, 1999).

Signed into law by President Clinton in August of 1996, PRWORA was designed to encourage faith-based organizations the right to bid for grants providing federally funded welfare services, without giving up their expressions of religion (Section 104 of H.R. 3734). Charitable Choice is a key part of the new federal welfare reform legislation created to give the same opportunity to faith-based groups that secular groups were offered. In order to achieve the goal of self-sufficiency for those on welfare, government officials asked for help from the whole community, including faith-based organizations. By developing Charitable Choice, hundreds of congregations and thousands of welfare recipients have already benefited. Government contracts have been made with faith-based organizations ranging from $5,000 to over $350,000. The churches that received grants under Charitable Choice have been empowered to move from merely providing commodities to the poor (i.e., free food or clothing), to working face-to-face with individuals in job training or mentoring programs (Sherman, 2000).

Using Charitable Choice money does not mean that churches have to be controlled by the government to receive funding, in fact the rules clearly state that churches retain their authority over the vision, mission and board choices and may also discriminate when hiring, based on religion (Sherman, 2000). The civil rights of clients are also protected under Charitable Choice. Beneficiaries are not to feel forced to receive help from a faith-based group, instead churches are asked to provide their clients choices.

When choosing to use the services of a faith-based group, clients cannot be forced to participate in religious services; again this should remain a choice. In nearly all the collaborations studied, Charitable Choice is working as designed and religious freedom for both the organization, and individual being served is respected. However, it is important that the formal language of the Charitable Choice provision be written into the contracts. This will prove to minimize problems for clients and congregations alike (Sherman, 2000).

The faith community needs to be educated about welfare reform and Charitable Choice; churches can no longer be ignorant and continue to do "business as usual." As Sherman (2000) said so well, "Put bluntly, food pantries - alone- in the era of welfare reform won't work" (p. 127). Familiarity with Charitable Choice is a necessity, and can provide churches the opportunity to build friendships with families affected by welfare reform. The availability of government funds should not be the driving force, but a complement to a well thought out vision. Churches need to know what their mission to their community is and be able to clearly define it (Sherman, 2000).

Boris and Steuerle (1999) report on a 1998 study from 1,236 congregations in the United States where the clergy or Rabbi was consulted in a 60-minutes interview about the involvement of their church in social services. Boris and Steuerle (1999) found that, "large congregations, politically and theologically liberal congregations, and, especially predominately African American congregations are most likely to seek public monies in support of social services" (p. 5). They also mention that only a small percent of churches give large amounts of time, money or staff to operate social services, usually providing short-term, small-scale relief.

> There are approximately 300,000 congregations in the United States; if one-half of one percent of those congregations is deeply engaged in social service action, this represents roughly 1,500 congregations. It (the study) provides some indication of those that are most likely to be be most active, namely, large congregations that are located in relatively poor neighborhoods but whose participants are not wholly low income. (Boris & Steuerle, p. 6)

Summary.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, an open door to the community has been swung wide again for churches and social workers to join hands. The Welfare Reform Act of 1996, with the addition of Charitable Choice and the recent popularity of "spirituality," has put our churches at a crossroads in community building and outreach to the poor.

Since 1998 and to the present, government has increased its interest in relating with faith-based organizations. Slowly churches are beginning to consider how they can use Charitable Choice opportunity to build relationships and help families in need. A reassessment of the gulf between the poor and the wealthy suburban congregations is a necessary beginning. The education and training social workers received could benefit churches in this reassessment, as the choices and challenges for churches are more complex than ever before (Carlson, 2001; Boris & Steuerle, 1999; Hodge, 2001; Ressler, 1998; Sherman, 2000).

Models of Church Social Work Today

Service work in the church today offers as much diversity as the culture we live in. Models used by churches found in the literature may be similar, but each congregation has its own distinct elements.

Because caring for others is at the heart of Christianity, pastors, volunteers, or other staff often carry out the service work in the church community. Much of the literature reviewed does not mention the involvement of professional social workers in the local church.

Models used by mainline protestant groups.

Baptist Tabernacle in Portland, Kentucky is a 90-year-old church whose community gradually became a part of the inner city. Crime and unemployment were a problem, and more than 750 members of Baptist Tabernacle died in the last 26 years, these factors almost proved to be a death sentence for the church (Bailey, 1993). They hired a social worker to implement a "Family Life Ministry Model," becoming a field placement setting for the local, School of Church Social Work. MSW students now intern there, giving ten to twenty hours each week. The program uses Hartford's, *Groups in Social Work* as the theoretical base for social group work. The practice design includes four categories of social work practice, structured into the organization so that institutionalization would occur as time passed. The four categories are: 1) group work, 2) family assistance, 3) community concerns, and 4) special projects. Each of these areas was also added to the church council to coordinate with other church functions. This design also serves to keep change to a minimum and prevented any negative reaction from the congregation (Bailey, 1993).

Though the Senior Group at Baptist Tabernacle had been in existence for years, additional group work was added to support widows and offer "reminiscing" groups. These groups help prevent isolation among seniors strengthening their social network. Natural helping evolved as seniors help other seniors with transportation, shopping and

visiting those who are ill or shut-in. An Alcoholics Anonymous group had been meeting at the church before the program design change, and social work professionals were able to add family practice therapy with the chemically dependent families, and training on the prevention and treatment of substance abuse for staff (Bailey, 1993).

A church social work intern at Baptist Tabernacle started a single parent's self-help group. New interns each year function as facilitator, coordinator and enabler, coordinating childcare, transportation and refreshments. Home visits are made by the worker to insure success for group members, with case management for families available on request. Other professionals from various agencies were used as resources, such as mental health treatment or welfare services, to meet client needs. A group for teen moms was started in the local high school after a community needs assessment identified five significant social problems, one being teen pregnancy. The social worker arranges for the needs of the group, personally meets with them, directing the flow of the meeting and setting the tone of the group with a spirit of acceptance and empathy. The group members choose the topics and set the rules. Another teen group called, The Straight Talk group gives teens a chance to converse about the issues that concern them, offering time to relax and have fun around billiards and table games. The second year the group developed into peer counseling, offering training for teens who in turn served as counselors in their schools. The social work interns designed evaluation tools for all the groups using single-system design, pre and post-tests with client feedback (Bailey, 1993).

Staral (1995) says Reformation Lutheran Church of Milwaukee, Wisconsin is an example of what many older Lutheran congregations' face. Because of inner-city poverty and movement away from the city by middle class families, membership began to

decline. By 1985 the neighborhood around Reformation Lutheran had become racially diverse, with crime on the increase and income on the decline (Staral, 1995). Additional pastoral staff was hired to function as social workers but no professional social workers were hired.

To allow the members at Reformation Lutheran to understanding of what had been taught in the groups that were offered to the community, the social workers designed several groups to help middle-class church members identify with "Family Life Ministry." Groups such as: Stress Management, Grief, TOPS and Tough Love raised the consciousness of the church members to community needs. The church social workers also planned a Family Life Festival each May, giving church members choices from a list of groups that were being offered to the community (Bailey, 1993).

The strategies used by Reformation Church parallel the generalist model of social work practice. Staral (1995) says,

> The generalist social worker must intervene in individual difficulties, but also work collaboratively and collectively in confronting community problems. The social worker needs to know when referrals are not enough and when someone must "walk with the poor" until the problem is resolved or the client has gained the competence to resolve the concern. (p.320)

The church worked at creating a safe, inviting community. People in the neighborhood who had been isolated were given mutual support; others were empowered and rejuvenated. Community was built on Sunday by blurring the line between the members and non-members, children were encouraged to attend services with or without an adult, breakfast was served prior to the services, church members greeted people outside the church in warm and cold weather, and after services refreshments were served. This was done in an effort to create community that did not end with Sunday

services. During the week there are various activities to which the neighborhood can come: community Bible studies on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, choir and a variety of educational opportunities on Wednesday night, with a community meal on Friday nights, small groups meet in private homes for personal faith sharing and game nights. During the week, members and neighborhood people frequently come to the church for coffee and casual visiting in a small cozy room, or wait for a chance to talk with the pastor. On most days of the week, as well as on Sundays, the church is a place of activity and a safe place to frequent. Because community is nurtured, a natural support system is created. When a mother's house burned down, a member of the church took the mother and her three children into their home for three months, until she found a new place to live (Staral, 1995).

At Reformation Lutheran church those that are helped have opportunity to give back to the church. Reciprocal giving serves a threefold purpose: 1) to ensure that the church is not seen as only a place for a hand-out, 2) to create a connection between the one seeking help and the church, 3) to allow the help-seeker to be seen as having something of worth to contribute. People coming to the church asking for free food, loans, bus tickets, or sometimes counseling for personal or family problems find help from the church if there are resources. In turn the pastor will ask what talents or areas of interest the person has to contribute to the ministry of the church. It is possible that the pastor, or peer minister, could invite the help-seeker to try different opportunities such as: answering the church phone, setting up rooms for meetings, greeting visitors, visiting the elderly in nursing homes, or attending social action meetings. The people receiving help can also accompany the pastor, or parish nurse, on initial home visits thereby making the

family visited more receptive. In exchange for their services the person receives support from the pastor in pursuing personal goals, and a stipend of forty dollars a week (Staral, 1995).

The pastors and other church members from Reformation Lutheran also work on coalition building within the neighborhood, meeting with groups such as: Northside Strategy, and Milwaukee Inner City Congregation Allied for Hope (a church-based social justice group). Additionally the pastors involve themselves in the neighborhood, developing relationships with teachers, principal's, local business people and others. The church also works with the city housing authority, local politicians, and the media to raise public awareness of drug houses. As a result of their efforts ten drug houses were closed within three months (Staral, 1995). In this spirit of cooperation, Staral (1995) referred to the work of Ernesto Cortex (1993) a faith-based community organizer and writer who supported the importance of the church in developing community. Cortex referred to the Latin root word of religion, "re-lare, which means to bind together that which is disconnected" (p. 303). Staral (1995) emphasizes the need for social workers to:

> . . . develop stronger coalitions and discover new allies in dealing with urban problems. Just as 'politics creates strange bedfellows,' social workers need to forge new alliances with agencies, businesses and other professionals who share concern about the urban poor. Churches should also be included in these alliances, both in terms of providing meeting places and support, and in joining with social workers in advocating for social justice. (p. 207)

Models used by evangelical protestant groups.

Evangelical Protestant churches utilize a variety of models, too numerous to mention in this section; though this researcher has tried to give a sense of all models that were found.

Christian Community Development Association (CCDA) was born in 1989. CCDA has nearly 400 member organizations in over 100 cities and 35 states. These groups of Christians start churches and community development corporations that offer the poor real solutions. They believe in living the gospel and sharing in the pain of other by living among them. The Voice of Calvary in Jackson, Mississippi is one example of a CCDA member church. Their services include a church, home ownership and family development program, health center, and thrift store. Other such ministries have been started in Detroit, Denver, Baltimore and Seattle (http://www.ccda.org/principles, html).

The Victory Christian Fellowship in Richmond, VA, offers a program called, Strategies to Elevate People (STEP) to help poor women off welfare and introduce them to Christ. STEP is an Academy through which residents can get their GED or enter community college. This program provides personal support, tutoring, and class times convenient for mothers with young children. Because life is difficult for many of these women, they are paired with their own "Family Share Team." The teams (made up of three to six Christians) encourage the women through the program. They also offer positive male "role models," support for the children and help in a time of crisis for the women (Sherman, 1996).

Brown (1997) writes about the mission of a Mennonite, inner-city mission church in New York. Its model is focused on building a community of ethnically diverse congregational membership by sharing the gospel, coffee and doughnuts. People come to this church because they have fun there, and the church offers a refreshing break after a hard week at work. Everything has not always gone smoothly at this church, but most of

the people remain loyal to the vision that brought them there. The vulnerability found in this church seems to bind people together, Brown (1997) said of his church:

> I will be able to restore unity among us only insofar as I am coming from a place of inner harmony: I will be able to contribute toward the mission of our church as a place of true hospitality where the stranger is welcomed only, insofar as I have allowed the stranger in myself to emerge. It is not race, age, language, ideas, sexual orientation, or place that has cut me off from my sisters and brothers. It is my unwillingness to reveal my brokenness, and my spiritual neediness. (p. 7)

McRoberts (1999) reported on several black Pentecostal pastors that have become involved in community organizing and development programs that were traditionally dominated by theologically liberal Protestants and Catholics. All the pastors in this study were theologically conservative, taking the Bible as the literal Word of God, yet liberal on most issues of affirmative action and social welfare. Rev. Powell, a black Pentecostal pastor, founded a church in 1981 because he didn't like the way the traditional church was set up. "The traditional church believes in coming to church, singing, shouting, and glorifying God, but (is) not concerned about what's outside of the church walls" (McRoberts, 1999, p.55). Another pastor, Bishop Brown, attributed his church growth to focusing on people who usually were forgotten by everyone else. He offers a weekly support group for drug addicts and alcoholics, advocating for people by standing up with them before the judge and visiting them in jail. Rev. Wright stood up against the "shunning" policies that alienated wayward youth in his community, and began to develop programs and events that would interest youth in the neighborhood, such as art fairs, etc. He became involved with various activist groups in the community and opened a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in his church after a drunken man stumbled into a church service. All these Pentecostal pastors believed that, "The Bible is associated with

activity and experience rather than viewed as a textbook of doctrine" (McRoberts, 1999, p. 61). Experience of the Biblical pattern takes precedence over confession according to the supposed theological content of Scripture. This viewpoint accounts for social and political involvement in their communities by black Pentecostal pastors (McRoberts, 1999).

Miller (2000) spent the past ten years researching and working with a growing band of Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Holiness (EPH) Christians gathered under another name called, Christians Supporting Community Organizing (CSCO). There are approximately 50,000,000 EPH Christians; their church storefronts are vibrant and growing in Black, Latino, and Asian inner-city neighborhoods. They are theologically conservative and desire to build churches that stand against consumerism and a "me first" ideology. This group has its spiritual ancestors in the city mission programs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century "social gospel" groups. Many white EPH Christians join together for racial reconciliation and apologize for past racial injustice. CSCO presents a Biblical theology of systems: political, economic, cultural and religious systems. They teach that God wants us to be good stewards of the land and its resources. According to CSCO's theologians:

> The economic system becomes one of exploitation, with the rich getting richer and the poor poorer. The political system becomes one of oppression, and its decisions favor those with wealth. Most debilitating, the cultural/religious system rationalized it all. Instead of loving God and neighbor, people love to consume, to be part of the status race, to make idols of material things. In these times, prophets arise to call the systems to account and to challenge the people to return to their faith . . .It just may be that this relatively small band of Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Holiness Christians will provide the moral compass for which Americans are desperately looking. (Miller, 2000, p. 38 & 41)

Tapias (1994) reports a different type of model used by Christians working against violent crime. When a gang member ran into Azusa Community Church for cover, other gangmembers followed spraying bullets everywhere. Eugene Rivers, pastor of Boston's Azusa Community Church, told the news media,

> "If the church won't go to the streets, the streets will come to the church." With those words ringing in their ears, several Boston-area pastors committed themselves to going in to the streets to build relationships and develop programs from the "street level" up. To their surprise, they were welcomed; "how come it's taken you so long to get out here?" they were asked. (Tapias, 1994, p. 3)

Models of church-state partnerships.

The church-state partnerships found in this section were (for the most part) not identified with Mainline Protestant or Evangelical Protestant groups, but held such a wealth of information that they have been included under their own grouping.

Churches have begun partnering with local parachurch organizations or have formed church-state partnerships for Christ-centered, welfare-to-work ministries. A variety of models are used for welfare-to-work programs: Mentoring, employment and clearinghouse. Carlson (1999) recommends that churches "first support existing ministries and neighborhood leaders before starting their own ministries. Starting one's own ministry is necessary when nothing else is available" (p. 71).

In 1997, in Birmingham, Alabama, The Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention founded The Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) to provide help for women needing to enter the job market. Women learn about this program through the county social and housing services. They agree to ten weekly sessions when signing up for the program. Each site leader must take CWJC National

and evaluation. Social workers are used, but the only requirement is the CWJC training. As of January 1999, there were 50 operational sites for CWJC across the nation (Carlson, 1999). "In May, 1997, CWJC was recognized by the White House as a viable program for assisting women in the transition from welfare to work." (Carlson, 1999, p. 72)

"Faith and Families" is another bridge organization between participating churches and the Department of Human Services (DHS) in the states of Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, and Arkansas. DHS initiates the contact with welfare recipients, letting them know they have the option of being paired with a church to receive additional support to be successful in staying off welfare. Churches are then given a blind profile of a family and asked to commit at least six months to that family. Field coordinators assist the churches with monthly support. More than 1,100 families since its inception in 1995, have been helped (Carlson, 1999).

Good Samaritan Ministries (GSM), another para-church ministry, equips churches to meet community needs, by using a church-based mentoring curriculum called, *Building Transformational Relationships with Low-Income Families.* Carlson (1999) notes, "It includes such topics as budgeting, goal-setting, self-esteem, and managing day-to-day problems" (p. 74). GSM's professional staff trains small teams from local churches to serve as mentor families, for six months to a year. This professional staff is called, FaithWorks Consulting, and was established in June 1998 to assist churches, governments and community organizations to develop church-based mentoring within the social service delivery system (Carlson, 1999).

Love INC, in partnership with World Vision USA, has developed a program called Relational Ministries. This program is tailored to address the long-term needs of

welfare families referred to them through Love INC. They utilize a mentoring curriculum to help families with budget counseling, financial freedom training for children, managing a bank account and also Bible studies. This ministry requires a six to ten person team from each church that adopts a family (Carlson, 1999).

New Focus is a "church-based relational system that allows churches to utilize 'Knock on the door' requests to move the poor to financial independence and spiritual growth through long-term relationships" (Carlson, 1999, p. 78). When people ask the church for help (knock on the door), they are invited to become part of this twelve-week Financial Freedom class and Compassion Circle, providing ongoing friendship and support for the person in need. Carlson (1999) says, "Some of their successes to date include a church in Minnesota that has helped 52 people from 19 families with 13,800 hours of volunteer time" (p. 78), (the church or community was not named).

One Church One Family (OCOF) came as a direct response to the 1996 welfare reform law. Founded in 1997, OCOF encourages families in churches to minister to welfare families in transition. The Foundation matches families with churches and provides training for volunteers and participants. The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services includes OCOF on its referral list for welfare family options (Carlson, 1999).

Putting Families First Foundation has as its mission to encourage every synagogue, church, civic club and organization in South Carolina to adopt and help a welfare family to independence. They want mentors to provide, "spiritual, emotional and material needs for families in poverty" (Carlson, 1999, p. 80). Churches form teams that

include a group coordinator, family mentor, a financial planner, and a special events coordinator who plan a special occasions once a month for every family (Carlson, 1999).

Summary.

When comparing the literature review to the intent of this study, it is clear that the church is involved in social work (Netting, 1984). The literatures provides an excellent basis for understanding and questioning the reasons why churches engage in social work, and why some churches recognize, while other do not realize, the value of employing social workers. This background also gives this researcher some understanding for churches in the Twin Cities that operate social service ministries with, or without, a professional social worker (Pittman-Munke, 1999; Shelly, 1995; Troeltsch, 1949).

Looking deeper into the research questions raised for this study and the literature review, we see that there is much to be learned. When we explore (research question 1) how church social workers view their position and connection to the church, it is important to remember from history that the church and social work separated in the early 1900's and they are only now joining hands again (Johnson, 1941; Manthey, 1989; Neibuhr, 1932; Pittman-Munke 1999; Shelly, 1995; Thomas, 1967). Therefore, this study would expect to still find much disconnect between the church and social work and possibly very few social workers actually employed by a church. Even social workers that are working in a church setting in the Twin Cities can be expected to be at an "arms length" from the church. The nature of their experiences (research question 2) from the literature review is reflected in more recent articles and follows the new federal welfare reform legislation and the Charitable Choice provision of 1996. Since 1996 there has been a gradual increase in churches providing social services to those in need. However,

the increase in employment of professional social workers has been even slower and the amount of time, money or staff provided to operate social services has been small (Boris & Steuerle, 1999; Carlson, 1999; Hodge, 2001; Sherman, 2000).

Since the emergence of Charitable Choice, Evangelical and Mainline Protestant churches have become involved, seeking new ways to help poor families. Faith-based initiatives involving church and state are no longer a rarity, but creative ventures designed to meet the challenges of families in need. When we look at the literature to give us insight into the type of models used by social workers (research question 3). The models reviewed in the literature showed a remarkable range of diversity and creativity. The Evangelical Protestants differed somewhat from the Mainline Protestants, with their activity concentrated more heavily, around social and political action - involving racial injustice and reconciliation (Miller, 2000; McRoberts, 1999; Sherman, 1996). Many of the faith-based initiatives focus on relationship and use a mentoring model (Bailey, 1993; Carlson, 1999; McRoberts, 1999; Miller, 2000; Staral, 1995). Therefore, we would expect to find programs using professional social workers, using the relationship and mentoring model.

Gaps in the Literature

Historically there is a shortage of literature written about church social work practice. Most of the literature found was written for the Christian social worker in secular organizations (Hogen, 1998; Hodge, 2000; Thomas, 1967; Ressler, 1998; Lowenberg, 1988). More recent literature (the small amount there is) describes and illustrates practice principles that are particularly applicable in the varying context of

church social work practice. However, there is a noticeable lack of authors writing specifically on the subject (Carlson, 2001; Garland, 1992; Sherman, 2000).

When the status of social work rose to a professional level in the 1930's, there was not much, if any, integration of social work and outreach in the church. After the 30's most social workers were employed outside the church. Since the return of "spirituality" in the late 80's, early 90's, the role of the Christian social worker has risen in visibility. Yet the consistently low numbers of professional social workers employed by the church, strongly suggest that most social workers do not see employment at a church a possibility; nor does the church seem to realize the possibilities or the benefits of a social worker on staff.

There is a need in professional literature to address church social work in several areas: Literature that would advise church social workers on the choice and use of specialized models, methods professors could use to prepare social workers for employment in the faith community, and literature that would educate clergy concerning the unique knowledge and skills social workers could bring to the mission of the church (Garland, 1992, Staral, 1995).

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY AND APPROACH

To gain a more complete picture of church social work practice, this researcher must have an understanding of how, church social workers view their position and connection to the church and community, the nature of the experiences church social workers have in their role, and what models church social workers use in their work. Symbolic interactionism is a perspective that can provide a theoretical rationale for understanding human social situations. Its concepts can help us analyze the way people interact with each other and their individual differences when interacting. This theory provides an excellent way of looking at social problems the church faces in their respective communities. A qualitative approach to a grounded-theory field study, is an approach capable of understanding the meanings and symbols church social workers use to value their work (Charon, 1995).

Theory Supporting the Research Approach

It seemed quite apparent that when the literature, in the previous chapter, examined recent models, qualitative methods were used. Very little of the literature used statistical methods, though there were some. Most literature was developed from a grounded theoretical point of view. The authors asked questions and sought to have them answered by asking, coding and analyzing (Glaser, 1992). As they interpreted situations the authors allowed the events be defined from the participant's perspective; in this way symbolic interactionism was being utilized, leaving the participants to define the situation rather than the author (Bogdon & Taylor, 1975; Charon, 1995).

Symbolic interactionism is a qualitative approach that allows researchers, to look at the different meanings people give to situations they find themselves in. Charon (1995)

says, "Always the focus was on how people defined their world and how that definition shaped their action" (p. 230). This study will also employ qualitative methods to uncover and understand the situation for each church social worker, as each one brings his or her own unique past experience and ways of viewing an issue. This method also takes into account the different ways of viewing social issues along theological and denominational lines. Social workers may fill different positions and roles, requiring different responsibilities. This diversity in roles along with other factors such as: ethnicity, age, sex or education can also play a role in defining a situation. This is important because people see things differently and focus their attention on different objects. Symbolic interactionism describes complex social problems, as well as ordinary day to day routines, capturing the ideas of each individual and placing value on their individual perspective (Boesch, 1991; Bogdon-Taylor, 1975; Charon, 1995).

Charon (1995) gives four summary ideas of symbolic interactionism. Firstly, this perspective focuses the interaction among people, rather than focusing on individual behavior or personality traits. Symbolic interactionism sees the human person as active in shaping both their behavior and the meaning it has for them. People, and the society they live in, are constantly changing as they interact, because this is true a more dynamic and active human being emerges. Secondly the idea is given that humans are influenced, not only by what happens to them (externally), but the meaning they give to that experience (internally). "We define our situation" (Charon, 1995, p. 23). Charon's (1995) third idea puts the focus of symbolic interactionism on the present, not the past. This perspective understands the human person as acting in the present, and being influenced primarily by what is happening in the now, at any given situation. No human being is just acting out

from past experience, rather our present situations are influenced by the past, when we recall what we have learned and apply it presently. Fourthly, Charon (1995) describes symbolic interactionism as flowing from the first three ideas. Because of the conscious choices we make in the present, by looking at our actions and the actions of others our future is defined, thereby assigning meaning.

Symbolic interactionism provides a theoretical perspective for investigating the world, "our interaction in a particular social world causes us to take on a perspective and then we use that perspective to define reality" (Charon, 1995, p. 32). Symbolic interactionism allows us to enter into the world of another human, to understand their complexity, learn their symbolic language, and understand their view of themselves.

Rationale for Qualitative Research

To understand church social work practice, we need a research method that will help us gain a better understanding of the settings in which they work, how their roles are shaped and viewed, and the varying models each one uses in relation to their role. Given these differences, the qualitative researcher is more adept at presenting each perspective accurately. Qualitative methods allow for these differences and give us an understanding of the people involved, while allowing us to really hear their words. "Qualitative methods allow us to know people personally and to see them as they are developing their own definitions of the world" (Bogdan-Taylor, 1975, p. 4).

Churches develop their own cultural group. Garland (1998) notes, "They have their own language, nonverbal symbols, norms, and patterns of relationships. They have historical identities that shape their current understanding of themselves" (p. 21). A qualitative approach fits well with the need to understand these cultural patterns.

Grounded theory with a qualitative approach is careful to accumulate and assess data before making an assumption. Even though there is a research hypothesis, grounded theory helps the researcher keep an open mind to new perspectives or problems identified by the subject. The qualitative approach assures that the subjects' words are afforded proper understanding by keeping in mind the context that they are given in (Boesch, 1991; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975).

Research Questions

Clergy are noted to spend a disproportionate amount of time with people in the role of social worker, encountering a wide range of issues they are not trained to deal with, and due to time constraints are unable to be as effective as they would like (Smith, 1999). As a result, some churches have hired social workers to develop and organize social programs in the church. Other churches have organized programs around social concerns and use volunteers to carry out these plans (Smith, 1999; McRoberts, 1999; Bailey 1993; Sherman, 1996; Brown, 1997; Haight, 1998; Jones, 1997). Still other churches do not address social concerns with any well-developed plans, but rather deal with each person who knocks on their church doors in a haphazard fashion. Other churches have developed psycodynamic-counseling centers, which primarily meet the needs of white, middle-class families. A growing number of churches have established foundations to meet social needs. These foundations often use the faith-based Charitable Choice initiative and use grants and government money to fund their programs, or joined with the state, in some fashion, to mentor families off welfare (Carlson, 1999; Derezotes, 2000).

The research questions that were the focus of this study arose from these issues, they were: 1) How do church social workers define their position and connection to the church and community? 2) What is the nature of the experiences church social workers have in their role? 3) What models do church social workers use in their work?

These questions provided the initial focus of this study. As perspective was gained in this study, the research questions were examined anew and were reshaped as new focus areas arose from the data.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

This research project is a grounded theory field study looking at the perspectives of church based social workers. The intention was to: 1) Explore how church social workers viewed their position and connection to the church and community, 2) Examine what experiences church social workers have in their role and, 3) Discover what models they used in their work. This chapter will include a description of the methods employed and the context, selection, and protection of participants. Data collection management and analysis, and measures to insure credibility will also be examined

Research Design

Field research was used to carry out this study. The research primarily utilized qualitative information to address the topic. The research questions outlined in chapter three led to the selection of a grounded theory approach as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The grounded theory process begins with observations and then looks for patterns, themes, or common categories in the qualitative data gathered. The hypothesis, that churches could develop a more effective and wholistic outreach ministry by employing professional social workers to develop programming, was the guide for creating the open-ended questionnaire used with subjects (Appendix-C). When a common pattern was perceived the hypothesis was modified and other aspects were probed. The subjects were reinterviewed by phone to verify the data (Rubin & Babbie, 2001).

Selection of Participants

This study obtained participants for this field research project by calling churches to ask if they employed social workers. The study was limited to the Twin Cities area;

defined as within the local calling range of the telephone service. This researcher selected from the available listings of churches (telephone directory, Qwest Dex yellow pages, Minneapolis A-Z). Three denominational headquarters (in the area) were called, asking if any of their local churches employed social workers (none did). Also, 87 churches of Mainline and Evangelical Protestant leaning were called. Each time a church was reached the researcher asked for other churches, in their synod, that may have social workers on staff. The snowball sample technique was intended to be the primary source of referrals, but led nowhere because the social workers found knew of no other church workers (one referral was given). Participants needed to be licensed by the State of Minnesota, at some level, as a social worker. The social workers also needed to be employed directly by a church congregation. There were no years of experience required and no gender specified. It was this researcher's intent to have equal number of Lutheran and Calvinistic church social workers; that did not happen.

Protection of Human Subjects

This study took several steps to ensure protection for those practitioners participating in this field research study. The interview guide and consent form (Appendix C) were mailed to the participants with a clear explanation of the study, identification of the researcher and how the participants were selected. This allowed the individuals the freedom to choose to join, or not to join the study, without any ramifications on their job status, or personal self-worth.

The practitioners were made aware that their responses and all data would be kept confidential. Possible participants were also told that there would be no direct benefits, or

rewards from study participation, and that all data would be destroyed at the end of this field research project.

This researcher gained approval from Augsburg College's Institutional Review Board (2002-4-2) to carry out this research. The specific steps in data collection and analysis are included (Appendix A).

Data Collection

A personal phone call was made to set up interviews with church social workers. The script that was used for this call is included for viewing (Appendix B). Once the interview was arranged, a cover letter with background information, procedures, risks and benefits of being in the study and confidentiality information was mailed to possible participants, along with a consent form. The cover letter and consent form are included (Appendix C) for viewing.

For the open-ended interviews this study used an interview guide to serve as a guide for the conversations. Questions were omitted or changed to flow with the conversation. The interview guide is included for viewing (Appendix D). In this study care was taken to ask relevant, easy to understand questions. Therefore, this researcher practiced with other graduate students of social work at Augsburg, to ensure understandability. A follow-up phone call was made to those participants who were interviewed, once the data was analyzed.

Qualitative research is not affected in the same way by validity as quantitative studies are. No empirical measurements are done, and no scales or instruments are used in qualitative research. Qualitative measures rely on unstructured interviews resulting in rich data. These open-ended questions and in-depth probes required clear, easy to

understand research questions. This researcher sought to ensure easy to understand questions, by clarifying interview guide questions in, Thesis Seminar class.

When determining the reliability of qualitative research, it is important to provide rich detail of what the subject said and how they appeared. When interviewing, this researcher: used a tape recorder for the entire conversation, took sketchy notes about the subject while interviewing and filled them out in detail soon afterward (Rubin & Babbie, 2001).

This researcher conducted follow-up calls to those subjects who were interviewed initially, to give them the interpretation drawn out of the data. This follow-up communication allowed the subject's confirmation of the researcher's observations, thereby making the study more valid (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). The specific steps taken in data collection are included for viewing (Appendix A).

Interviews

Rubin and Babbie, (2001) noted that, "Systematic error occurs when the information we collect reflects a false picture of the concept we seek to measure, either because of the way we collect the data or the dynamics of those providing the data" (p. 177). When biases get in the way of data collection, something other than what we thought we were measuring is measured. When interviewing participants it is important not to sway subjects to the sort of response desired. Our facial expressions, as well as our words, need to convey a neutral approach and must not encourage an acquiescent response set. It is easy for people to do, or say things that they feel will make them look good, or as though they have succeeded in the researcher's eyes. Researcher bias in this study cannot be removed completely; due to the reality that this study was approached

from a particular worldview. However, the opinion of this researcher was minimized by intentional use of neutral communication – both verbally and non-verbally, and biases were avoided, as much as was humanly possible.

Random error can occur if we disturb the pattern of answers and continually record different results. If the researcher asks a question using terminology a participant does not understand and they answer "yes" one time but "no" another time, this would indicate random error (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). By pretesting the interview questionnaire, this researcher sought to decrease the occurrence of random error by making sure that terminology and questions were easily understand.

Data Management

All the recorded data was transcribed into Microsoft Word. There was a file for each participant, which contained the transcribed interview and a detailed description of the context of each participant. Each file was identified by a pseudonym to ensure the participant's confidentiality. The disks, recordings, and interview transcripts were stored in the researcher's file drawer, unless in use.

Data Analysis

Data analysis begins with the observations the field researcher makes on the first interview. The researcher listens for issues that have a bearing on the research question and then asks for further detail. This shows the advantage of the "researcher as instrument" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 53). Qualitative research requires the use of inductive logic. This research studied the similarities, dissimilarities and differences found in the notes taken from the individual interviews. Themes were searched for among the data, patterns noted and dissimilarities were recorded and given a category name.

This researcher obtained a small set of categories that were relevant to the topic, these concepts emerged as the data was studied and coded. As the coding and analysis began, whatever was important was allowed to develop into a grounded theory (Glaser, 1992).

The strongest advantage of field research mentioned by Rubin and Babbie (2001) was that the "interaction between data collection and data analysis affords a greater flexibility than is typical for other research methods" (p. 415). With this kind of developing model, the hypothesis can change according to observations. This strength can also become a limitation. While talking to practitioners it could be very easy to observe only those things that support the hypothesis the study started with. An awareness of this issue was the best barrier against misuse. This researcher guarded against slipping into preconception, instead of listening carefully to the data, to understand what the church social worker really meant to say (Rubin & Babbie, 2001).

For organizing the nominal (race & gender) and ratio (age) data, this study did not use any special means, since there were only four subjects. Ordinal, interval and ratio measures were not used in this study.

Conclusion

The methodological approach of this research, on the perspectives of church social workers, was a grounded theory field study. The research questions that were outlined in chapter three led to the selection of this approach as the best fit. This area of church social work practice has been relatively unexplored. This study was designed to discover the perspective of professional church social workers in the Twin Cities area, the nature of their experiences and the models that they use to carry out their tasks. A

experiences and the models that they use to carry out their tasks. A qualitative study such as this can produce credible perspectives on the role of social workers in a church setting.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS

The findings of this study of social workers employed by Twin Cities area churches are presented below. Qualitative research and grounded theory in general, can only be understood in their social context (Charon, 1995; Boisch, 1991; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). Therefore, descriptive findings are presented first to illustrate the socio-demographic information about each church social worker and the context of the setting.

Descriptive Findings

A total of six subjects were interviewed for the study. Two subjects did not have professional training in social work, though the researcher was not aware of that fact when the interview was set up. Therefore, only four interviews were used in this study.

In the proposal for this study it was indicated (and planned) that social workers would be interviewed from two different perspectives – Calvinistic and Lutheran. Using that understanding calls were made to churches, and denominational headquarters, in search of licensed social workers employed by these churches. This researcher was able to locate six workers with only four qualifying for the study. The four social workers used in this study were all connected with the Lutheran church (ELCA). These social workers' names and church names were replaced with a pseudonym corresponding with their letter designation: SW-A, SW-B, SW-C and SW-D. Presented below are the descriptive findings from the social workers, consisting of their demographics and the context of the congregations and community where data was collected. The information was kept purposely vague to protect anonymity for the subjects.

Socio-Demographics of Social Workers

SW-A is a Caucasian male, in his late 50's; he received his MSW in the late 60's and since then obtained his LICSW and ACSW. He spent the major part of his career with a large para-church organization. At the time of this interview he was working full-time as director of the para-church organization and part-time at a large suburban Lutheran church, supervising interns and doing a small amount of counseling. Since the time of this interview he has begun full-time work for the church.

SW-B is a Caucasian female in her early 50's. She received her MSW in the late 70's, worked as a school social worker for three years and then took time off to raise her children. During the time she was a stay-at-home-mom, she continued to do volunteer work. Five years ago she started working part-time with families in a transitional housing triplex in the Twin Cities owned by a suburban Lutheran church.

SW-C is a Caucasian female in her early 20's, a recent graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in social work. This is her first job and she presently works full-time at a shelter owned by a Twin Cities Lutheran church, as case manager for 20 clients. Her internship while at college, was at an elementary school.

SW-D is a Caucasian female in her mid-50's. She received her Bachelor's Degree in social work seven years ago. Initially she worked for a para-church organization in transitional housing. She has been in this position, as full-time case manager for program renters at an apartment complex for two years. A Twin Cities Lutheran church owns the apartment.

Context of Workers Environment

SW-A works out of a renovated home, on a large church property in an outlying suburb, which functions as a counseling center. This ELCA church is a growing congregation with a heavy concentration of young Caucasian families, with several Somali individuals among them. Around two thousand people attend services and events each week. The center is a non-profit counseling and referral service provided by the church. It is open to both members and those from the surrounding community. Counseling is provided for families and individuals, children, adolescents, pre-marital and marriage counseling, care and recovery groups, with education and speaker resources also available. SW-A reports that the center is doing well and they are able to offer services for a variety of needs, mostly within the congregation. Groups are offered weekly for divorce recovery, parenting and grandparenting support sandwich generation and AA groups. The church is presently investigating the possibility of grant money to support the growing center.

SW-B works at a transitional housing center located in the Twin Cities. A large suburban ELCA Lutheran church, of mostly Caucasian members, runs this facility with an attendance of around a thousand. This church felt strongly about homelessness in the city and purchased (using a HUD grant) a triplex to offer housing. SW-B's job is to work with the three families living in the triplex, setting goals and doing career planning. These families are most often single moms from various ethnic backgrounds. Volunteers from the church work also with the families providing: friendship, help with homework, building repairs and mentoring. The families can occupy the home for a one-year period, which may be extended for up to two years.

SW- C is employed as a case manager doing orientations for new residents at a shelter in the Twin Cities. An ELCA congregation a short distance away owns this shelter. They have a paid staff of six full or part-time workers, with all but one of the staff being Caucasian. They served over 1,000 people seeking temporary shelter in 2001, and deal mostly with newly homeless persons. Everyone who comes to the shelter gets a bed and is given a rent-free 30-day stay. While they are there, they need to be accountable to a case manager and working on job finding. They are also encouraged to build up a savings account, which will enable them to be able to handle initial costs for new housing, and then be actively looking for a place to live. If individuals make progress towards these goals their stay can be extended up to 90 days. The longer they stay the better chance they have to find more traditional housing when they leave. This congregation has a history of work with the homeless. Twenty years ago the city requested help from churches to address the issue of homelessness, this ELCA church responded initially, by housing the homeless overnight in their church basement. In the early 90's they purchased a residence for single men and a couple years later, a home for single women. In the mid-90's they purchased a building for a homeless shelter. Each night they house approximately 40 people, with other individuals turned away on a daily basis. For those residents who show good progress towards reaching their goals, but need more time to achieve them, longer-term housing can be applied for at one of the three transitional housing facilities close by.

SW-D is a residential advocate for low-income renters with an office of three full-time staff: SW-D, a grant writer, and an office manager. This facility is an outreach of an ELCA Congregation of about 200 members. The African American pastor of the

supporting church also serves as executive director for the apartment complex. The apartments were re-developed in response to the neighborhood's need for affordable housing. In the late 90's members of the church witnessed a drug raid in the apartment building. This made a significant impact on the members, and they purchased the building and began renovations. They started accepting residents in 1999 and served 15 adults and 29 children, in 2000 they served 17 adults and 35 children, in 2001 they served 21 adults and 21 children. All the renters are low-income single moms with children under 12, who have a job or attend school. They are asked to pay 30 percent of their income for rent. A four-plex, further down the street, was purchased a couple years later and was also renovated to provide additional low-income housing. The church is presently negotiating to buy another apartment building close by, and will be adding additional staffing for that building. This program differs from other housing programs, because anchors tenants work and live with the program participants, to offer a stable environment for those families in transition.

Theoretical Findings

The grounded theory that has emerged from this study is the result of hour-long interviews and follow-up calls with subjects. This data was analyzed according to Glaser & Strauss (1967). The process of coming to this grounded theory is outlined in chapter four. The plan to derive grounded theory from a working hypothesis is detailed in Appendix A.

The initial data was grouped into categories and developed into themes. These themes were modified and additional categories were identified. The informants were contacted again to confirm or alter the themes and reframe details.

The theory grounded in the data of this study and emerging from the process described above is stated as follows and answers the research questions: 1) Explore how church social workers define their position and connection to the church. 2) Examine the nature of the experiences church social workers have in their role. 3) Discover what models church social workers use in their work.

Each theme that was identified will be included along with the research question it most closely fits with. The themes that came out of the interviews are role definitions, role shaping factors, models or framework used.

Interview Themes

The data was divided into themes: role definitions, role shaping factors and models used. Though the discussions varied, the themes uncovered clearly carried across all the interviews.

Role definitions.

The social worker's activities are influenced by definition of their role. This theme is clearly connected to research questions one and two and explores how the social workers define their position and examines the nature of their experience. All workers did not experience these role definitions alike. Role definitions were grouped into five categories: gatekeeper, guidance counselor, empowerment, educator and visioning.

(a) *Gatekeeper* is understood by this researcher to mean someone who is hired to keep order and make sure that the clients, as defined by the church, keep the rules.

(b) *Guidance counselor* is viewed as the ability of the social worker to offer direction, counsel and advice.

(c) *Empowerment* happens when a social worker focuses on client's strengths and finds ways to offer encouragement to forge on.

(d) *Educator* is understood as offering information to a client, or church congregation.

(e) *Visioning* happens when a social worker works with the church to define and plan for the future.

The specific actions social workers in this study took in their counseling and referral practices, were influenced by the way they defined their role. This *role definition* had some differences, but two social workers, SW-D and SW-B, described their roles in similar terms.

SW- D defined her role as a balanced combination of all perceptions listed: she decides who comes into the program thereby functioning as a *gatekeeper*. She also serves as *guidance counselor* while clients are living in the apartments, guiding their choices, advising them about job options, or permanent housing. She uses *education* and *empowerment* as a tool to deal with program participants, encouraging them to run their own monthly house meetings, elect their own chairperson and secretary, and decide on topics to cover and speakers to invite:

> It's always in the back of my mind to give choices when it is possible. Although, because it is a program, there are some set things. I tell them, "If you don't do this like we say, your program may be terminated." But I do have an appeal process, so I follow that statement with: "if I ever make a decision about your situation that you don't agree with, appeal that decision." That's part of empowering them.

There is also a part of SW-D's job that involves *visioning*. She plays a major role in visioning where the church should focus future outreach efforts. The director (who is also the church pastor) and board use SW-D's knowledge of clients and the program to

design their future plans. They are presently investigating the purchase of another apartment complex and utilize her knowledge and skills to assist their decisions.

> (SW-D) The vision for that program is really to duplicate this one. We'll be serving the same population over there, and there are lots of needy people; it could be very exciting and a little scary for me you know to be a part of a larger program. We're fussy about who comes into the program. Because I'm in my mid-50's, I wanted to work with people that are ready to succeed. We only took 22 applications, I think it was, out of 91 calls.
> (Interviewer) Is your vision to purchase the apartment you're looking at, and hiring more staff to assist you?
> (SW-D) The plan is to do the same programming over there, but another social worker will be at that building, that's the way it's looking right now.

SW-D's main role is that of *guidance counselor*. As she guides people through the Program manual (usually an eight-month process), she listens to their problems, helps them problem solve and encourages them to keep on moving ahead.

SW- B also viewed her role using all five definitions. She functions as a *gatekeeper*, acting as part of a team that decides who occupies the apartments. She finds the opportunity to *empower* her clients and former clients a challenge. "I meet with the families every single week for the first two to three months and then every other week for the rest of the time they are here," helping them find ways to keep their goals and save money. Even clients who have moved on still need direction or support and SW-B willingly provides that help, functioning as a *guidance counselor*.

> I keep connections with them for years and many of them almost see you as a family member because they know you as someone they can depend on. They feel the same way about their support team and family friends as well. It's kind of like someone they can call and talk to who doesn't expect anything back, who doesn't have ulterior motives that would get them caught or in trouble. I spent the morning with a client who moved out a year ago because she had a 15-page form to fill out and could not do it on her own. What I like best is being able to work with people long-term and not have so many people that I feel I can't see them whenever I need to or whenever they want to see me.

SW-B finds she plays a large role as an *educator*. This role takes on a multifaceted, dynamic approach as she educates new clients and also educates the church about the families. "For _____ Lutheran church (the sponsoring church in the suburbs), I've helped them see what the cause of homelessness essentially is, inform them about specific problems and our needs here." She attends the housing board meetings, held at the church, participates in the educational forum about the church housing (held monthly), and gets together every three months with her volunteers to discuss what's going on, what needs the families have and how they can help make this a good experience for their clients. She participates in fundraisers during Lent at the church, placing little vignettes about the families on tables for the Lenten suppers. SW-B also has say, as a team-member and congregational member, where they should go in the future and what the *vision* should be.

Role definitions were different for the other two participants. With SW-C her role was defined solely as, *gatekeeper*. SW-C shared a statement she used with a man at the shelter, "Yeah, you're saving your money, but it doesn't mean you can just keep staying here and use our facilities. Because if you have the money for housing you have to move on." Another time she said to this researcher, "To stay here they can't be using drugs or alcohol and they must follow the rules." Very little of SW-C's time is utilized as a guidance counselor, visionary or someone who empowers others. She would feel much better about her role if this were possible. SW-C talked about how great it would be to help people with everything they need for life: "employment, birth certificates and ID's, and issues concerning their faith."

SW-A's role is primarily *visionary*. Much of the conversation in the research interview, revolved around dreams and plans for the counseling center.

> I'm not part of the management team here; I'm just a part-time, on-staff person. My vision is to use the social work concept of continuum of care. And that's why I'm really interested in the model of a church in California, because they do some of the same as what we're talking about. We probably do not even go to the extent that they go. But that's where I am. We have a pastoral care ministry, we have a small group ministry, we have an adult ministry, we have a children's ministry. I think adult and children's ministries are separate. But what I envision, is pastoral care, small group ministry, counseling center, Stephen ministry, prayer minister, all of those under one heading which would be care and recovery; using the social work continuum model. On one end, we ought to be serving people who are in a job search and people in the church, but we also must serve the broader community who have basic needs like food. There is a food shelf in the community and we contribute to that. But I see us getting even more involved in that aspect. That way people see you as a place where they can come for all their basic needs. To the far end of the continuum would be people needing, mental health services and offering groups for bulimia or anorexia. I am working on very aggressively with the church to provide training of group leaders. So on this end of the continuum we have people that are very healthy but wanting to make connection with God. We need to find ways for get involved in our Bible study groups or our care groups, and make connection with God on that level. I see Bible studies, as fitting under the care and recovery model which traditionally it hasn't.

Though he presently works as a *visionary*, he also feels - and is - capable of all the other role definitions. SW-A is not restricted in his use of the role definitions but sees this role as critical, due to the newness of the program. The church is presently going through a visioning process, focusing on how the center should be operating five years from now.

Summary.

How a social worker defines or views their role affects job satisfaction and how they meet job challenges. When SW- C defined her role as gatekeeper, she found herself frustrated when the clientele broke the rules, because she was powerless to do anything more for them.

SW- B and SW- D were comfortable with their positions and were able to utilize most of the role definitions. They expected challenges with clients but did not find them frustrating because they used empowerment as a tool to motivate and encourage them.

SW-A shapes his job and the positions of the counselors he employs. This allows him to not only define his job, but set the tone of the environment. Visioning allows him to define his role fully and completely, giving him extra excitement and enthusiasm about his work.

From this section it would seem important to allow church social workers to be part of a visioning team or have some control over hiring, office space and the direction of future ministries. To only give a church social worker the power to discipline those that break the rules seems a sure formula for job dissatisfaction.

Role Shaping Factors

How church social workers define their role is influenced by various **role-shaping factors**. This theme is clearly connected to research questions one and two, and explores definition of their position and examines the nature of their experience. The factors that shape the social worker's perception of their role are important in how they define their role, or how satisfied they are with their position. These shaping factors were present in all the subjects, even though the effects were not always positive.

(a) Religious belief is understood as the worker's personal belief in God freely shared with the client.

(b) Environment / setting consists of the working environment, office space, etc.

(c) Clientele refers to the type of client such as; transient, long term, or a client that is being seen under a counseling situation.

(d) Vision of the church involves the perception of the church when viewing the role of the social worker.

The factors that shape the social workers perspective of their role, culminate in how satisfied they feel about their job. SW- C finds little satisfaction in her job as case manager at the shelter. She does orientations for new residents and has a caseload of about 20 clients. She does initial intakes of work history, rental history, financial situation, chemical dependency or mental illness and often finds the *clientele* difficult. "If they don't want to work with me then it makes my job more difficult because if they are not motivated to make any effort, we do not force them, but then they won't be extended beyond the 30 days." When asked if her job was frustrating she said,

> It is frustrating; we have a couple guys in here, both young. I wouldn't say they're chronic users yet, because they're young, but they're the types that are set in their ways. They don't want to get a job and are content to be in a shelter. They both went from here before, to one of the other shelters and then they came back here. They sit here and say all the things that they want to do, but they won't do anything. So I said to the one guy yesterday, "so what did you do and what are you going to do today that is productive?" He said, "Oh, I don't know. Wherever my day takes me." I said, "Well, why don't you go and look for employment?" He said, "Jesus, ----- you've told me this 40 times." I said, "Well, I'm going to tell you another 40 times." I mean, they need to get a part-time job. Then we also have a man who is in his 60's and he has been a pretty chronic user of the shelter and he just doesn't want to work. To get out of this situation you have to work, and I don't know if he ever will."

SW-C's low job satisfaction is predetermined by other factors that shape her role. The *environment or setting* for the program is designed to give temporary shelter and the requirements for staying are very minimal. Because it is left up to the men and women to get themselves motivated, she does not have power to enforce mandatory meetings or programs. Her position seems devalued because it has been robbed of any power.

> Many times during the day, I don't have much to do, so when somebody lets me know that they're looking for help to get a job, I'm not sure I can help. It's really up to them because I don't have any set steps they must follow.

In the role SW-C has, she does not share the *vision of the church* or feel empowered by their vision. When asked if she has any role or connection to the church that runs the shelter she replied, "I don't, but the manager of our transition house, goes to that church. She has formed a connection, but it doesn't get brought into the work part at all". SW-C also feels very *restricted in sharing her faith* and yet believes that addressing the spiritual needs of the clients is something that is lacking in the program. Part of the apprehension she feels is the way the programming is set up, with no Bible studies being offered, and some is her own personal belief.

> We can't require them to go to something that we are going to plan. So, um, I could try to get outside people to come in and do a Bible study, but I necessarily won't be able to do it... I have opened up to people before about spiritual matters when they've opened up about it and it really only caused barriers, then they expect more from me. It is very unfortunate because I really wish that I could encourage clients and say that faith is very important. But when I do that, or when I have done that, they don't see me as their case manager any more, or their social worker. They see me more as a godly woman stepping out of being a social worker. This is still a job and I'm not here to be their friend and so I think that has made it difficult.

Other factors may play into SW-C's job dissatisfaction. Her way of dealing with the environment in the shelter, and not feeling free to share her faith may correlate to her age and the newness of this position for her. All the other workers interviewed for this study were over 50 and had much experience with life and employment.

SW- B at a transitional house operated by another ELCA church finds her 20-hour a week job, as case manager, very is rewarding. She feels empowered by the *vision of the church* and her *clientele* feeling free to share her *religious beliefs* with them.

> People are very comfortable praying with the families. We tell them when we interview them that this is a church-based facility and that we start every meeting with a prayer. We don't care if they are Christian or Muslim, it doesn't make any difference, but we ask to see if they are comfortable with us praying. No one has ever said they are not comfortable with that, but of course it may be due to the fact that they want to get in on the housing. Usually someone from the support team, or myself, also offers a Bible study, so it is a reflection of our faith in Christ and our beliefs about helping the homeless.

Her *environment* has empowered her to enjoy her job and do it well. The church provides a volunteer coordinator to secure volunteers for the families they minister to. Because of this supportive help, SW-B is afforded time to form relationships with the families and be there when they need her.

> I don't have to do all that work, finding volunteers. Wow, this is a dream job. The volunteer coordinator sets up for: the reading buddies, BI-monthly meetings, meetings with families, friends and support team members. I spent the morning with a client who moved out a year ago. She had a 15-page form to fill out and couldn't do it on her own. This is what I like best, being able to help people long-term and not have so many people that I feel I can't see people whenever I need to or whenever they want to.

SW-D is case manager for clients that have moved into the apartment complex and have chosen to be part of the program. She uses a well-defined curriculum that takes about eight months for residents to complete. SW-D loves her job and wants clientele that she can be successful with. Her *environment* has designed her position so she can select who gets into the program giving her additional power to define her role.

> We look at credit, criminal and mental history to see how many issues they have. Not that any one of those things might eliminate a person, but we do take a "can we possibly be successful with this person," approach. Another staff person and I interview together, and get an idea during the interview how committed we think this person could be to the program. To be in the program they have to agree to having no overnight guests and no drugs or alcohol in the building. The no-overnight guest's thing is kind of a sticker for some people. If that stands in the way of their coming into the program, then it wasn't a good fit. People in our program realize they need to make some changes in their lives, that their choices were bad and

> that's what got them into their situation. Until they realize these things, our program really won't work for them.

The clients are empowered by the boundaries in this *environment* and are often successful; this in turn increases SW-D's job satisfaction. Susan reports proudly on the expectations and outcomes for her program.

> I have some people whose pre-tests on nutrition come out at 40%. Then after the program, they may have to take the post-test over again because there still wasn't enough improvement. My goal is to get them to understand at least 80% of all the material we go over.

The pastor at the sponsoring church, is also the executive director and half of the board membership is comprised of congregational members. Wednesday nights a free dinner is offered at the church next door to the apartments. The pastor offers weekly Bible studies and annual spiritual retreats for the residents. The pastor often will ask SW-D to explain the program to people that don't understand, or visit other churches sharing the *vision of the church* and its need for support.

> Pastor _____asked me to explain our program to a guy who had an apartment complex for sale. I told him about homeless people and what we do with the people, who come into our program that changed his opinion. He didn't realize that ordinary people often get into this situation, not chronic alcoholics. I'm not trained in CD issues, you know, if that's their problem, there are programs out there for them. We're helping single moms who are on the career path. These are the people that we help here.

SW-D feels free to express her faith in God to clients and sees *religious beliefs* as an important element for clients to have in their lives. "I will say to them, I just know from my own experience, life goes better with God you know." SW-D's feelings about her job are best described in this statement from the interview.

> I was totally shocked. I was looking for a job change. I was working in ---- ---------- and looking for a change when I saw this ad in the Star Tribune. I could not believe that this kind of job actually existed. It's so freeing.

SW-A views his position as the ultimate job, the one he has been working toward for years and the one he wants to end his career with. "That's where I have been working toward my entire career. I've got ten years, I figure, and my career is up and I want to spend it with the church. How it's going to play out here I don't know, but that would be my dream." In the setting SW-A works, he has complete control over how the programming and staff are arranged. The *environment/setting* for the center is in a separate building from the church, affording clients plenty of privacy. This new and more private facility also increased his job satisfaction.

> We were meeting in the church; it just wasn't a good space; sharing an office with someone else. I said, if we are going to grow, we need something different. The building we are now housed in was actually going to be demolished. We walked over and looked at it and the structure was really pretty decent. So we just crawled in, a bunch of volunteers and myself. Then I needed some staff but knew we couldn't afford to hire counselors at that point. God provided and I got a call from a couple students who go to our church needing internships.

He feels very hopeful about the mission and *vision of the church.*

> The mission statement is very simple, transforming lives to a Christ-centered community. And what that means, by transforming lives, as I understand the mission statement, is really to transform anyone's life, whatever their needs are. This includes those who have lost a job, even if they are not members of our church.

SW-A feels very free to share his *religious beliefs* with clients. "That's evangelism, that's where my passion is, even in counseling I do a lot of spiritual counseling." SW-A's role is primarily defined as an administrator and a vision caster due in part to his past experience. He did have a full-time job with another organization till just recently. Now he works full-time for the church at the counseling center. SW-A is also involved in giving advice concerning grant options for the church-counseling center.

Summary.

Three out of the four workers in the study gave very positive feelings about their job and reported feeling very satisfied in their role. Those three workers that enjoyed their work, experienced the entire role shaping factors in a positive sense. The social worker who was not satisfied in her position also experienced these factors, but in a negative manner.

Models Used

The **models** used differed according to the perception of their role. The more rigidly their role was defined, fewer models were utilized. This hypothesis answers research question three, what models do church social workers use? The models implemented by these subjects include:

(a) Recognition and training for basic human needs or Maslow's hierarchy. People have fundamental needs for physiological and safety needs, not until these are met can individuals move on to progress to higher level needs such as: belongingness and love, esteem needs and self actualization.

(b) Referrals to other agencies. This happens when the worker makes suggestions to their clients about other services that could give them assistance such as: chemical dependency treatment, county services, etc.

(c) Use of religious language and symbols by the worker. Use of these icons show how free they feel to express their faith, pray, talk about God or use religious art in their office space.

(d) Mentoring. This involves modeling positive communication and spiritual development by the worker or volunteers working with the clientele.

(e) Continuum of care and recovery. This focuses on connecting the client to groups and/or individuals that could nurture and aid the client toward healing and recovery.

SW- B uses *Maslow's hierarchy* of needs, and also does *some referrals to other agencies,* she said:

> We can help people look at lots of different parts of their lives, we don't have to compartmentalize and say well, we don't have time for that, this is the only thing we can deal with now. If they want to bring up anything from counseling to finances, housing, relationships, child care or child discipline, we do all that because there is time to do it. It also might mean referring them on to another program for help.

This church also supplied SW-B with ample *mentors* and volunteers. This freed her to have time to do the guidance, education and empowerment she was hired to do.

> Well, obviously, there are volunteers for the families. There is the mentoring family and I always have at least six people who are support team members. Then there are three additional families who are doing family and friend support; often the families will stay connected once the people have moved on. We have another program of reading buddies, so that every Monday some of the high school students from the church will come down and do homework with the kids at the triples. It is very popular. All the kids just love it. We also have a volunteer coordinator who works with setting up reading buddies, BI-monthly meetings and meeting where all the families, friends and support team members get together.

SW-B frequently uses *religious language and symbols*, noting that the volunteers are also very comfortable praying with the families. She tells them when they are interviewed for renting, that this is a church-based facility and each meeting begins with prayer. The only model that SW-B did not use was the *continuum of care model.* She did not provide any care or recovery groups for the women, but they did offer Bible studies and mentoring through the volunteers.

SW-D uses *Maslow's hierarchy* as an active part of her model. She uses it when she speaks about the program for the women in the apartment and when she deals with

them on an individual basis. She related the story of a woman who had her basic needs met and then was able to start giving back to the community.

> As soon as her basic needs were met, she was able to look out into her community and become a helper. She became a member of the sponsoring church and as an active member, volunteers to make welcome baskets for new people coming into the program. In July she is going on a four-day spiritual retreat to improve her spiritual life. She's always here at the Bible study and she has a good job. At her first performance review recently, she was totally amazed at all the praise from her supervisor. We have a savings match program and she saved $1,200, which is the max. She went to three homebuyer classes and now is in the process of using that money for closing costs, or a down payment on a house.

SW-D spoke of another client who was at the first level of *Maslow's hierarchy* (basic human needs) and was unable to dream.

> I'm thinking about one client in particular, where she was unable to dream. When I would ask her: In your dream life, are you married? What kind of house do you have, Do you have a house? Her response to me was, "yeah, maybe." She felt she had no problems now because she had a roof over her head and food on the table. She lived with a crisis mentality.

SW-D was also not afraid to use *religious language and symbols*. Prayer for the people in her program was important to her and she asks various congregations to pray for the families.

> I wanted a small group of women from each church to choose one person to call all 13 of my moms and say, " I'm from this church and we would like to pray for you, what could we pray for you about?" What would happen with this could benefit both groups. If my moms did not have a relationship with God, that could open a huge door. The person might think, "wow, what is this about?" It could raise all kinds of questions they might seek answers to. On both sides it would be a great thing, but I've only had one church that would do this. It's a small thing, but people are afraid to get involved with the people we serve.

SW-D does not use *mentors* in her program; although there are people from various churches that bring gifts at Christmas. There are some people they *refer to other agencies* for education on home buying or other issues.

> I have referred certain people, like a person who had problems with anger that interfered with her work situation, as well as my ability to work with her. Because of those two reasons, I kind of pushed her to go to Anger Management classes; I didn't force but strongly encouraged her to go.

The three staff and the pastor/executive director do most of *the training and mentoring*. The *care and recovery model* is not one SW-D uses.

SW-A feels strongly about the *care and recovery* model. His whole program is built around connecting people with people and providing groups that would meet the recovery needs of individuals.

> Rick Warren is the senior pastor at Saddleback Church, out of California. His church is totally been built around care and recovery. One of my concerns about Christian counseling is that a lot of people that connect with the church simply hurt: divorce situations, addiction issues, and grief and loss issues. One of the things that I have been able to do here that I have never been able to do in counseling all of my life; now when I get someone to the point of wanting to heal, I can connect them with people at church or a group. I always tell people, "if you're interested, I've got somebody you can talk to."

With the use of the *continuum of care* model the concepts of the *mentoring model* were also utilized by SW-A.

Summary.

As many as four models were used by two of the social workers, SW-B and SW-D. SW-A used two models: religious language and symbols and the continuum of care and recovery model, though his use of mentors in the care and recovery model was quite apparent. One social worker, SW-C did not utilize any model because she functioned primarily as gatekeeper in her role.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

This investigation of how church social worker's view their position, the nature of their experiences and use of models, turns now to a discussion of the study's findings. The implications of the findings for social workers and churches will be looked at. In order to accomplish this, a discussion of the limitations, both of the research methods and the application of the findings will be examined, including a deconstruction of grounded theory.

Deconstruction

The purpose of deconstruction is to examine how well the theory and concepts that emerged from the data, fit with the existing literature when compared to it (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984).

The church social workers interviewed for this research gave a clear picture of the concern their churches had for improving the community. Olasky (2000) asked, the then Governor George W. Bush, to write the forward for his book. In the forward Bush said, "Government can do certain things very well, but it cannot put; hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives. That requires churches and synagogues and mosques and charities" (Bush, as cited in Olasky, 2001, p. 2).

The social workers interviewed for this study clearly pointed out, the desire their sponsoring churches had that clients receive purpose and hope for their lives. To achieve

that goal, each church began where it thought a difference could be made. SW-C noted that the inception of the homeless shelter was in the basement of the church 20 years ago, as a result of a request from the city. SW-D reported that the purchase of the apartment for transitional housing came because the church was concerned about the neighborhood being taken over by drug lords. SW-B shared the vision of her suburban church, whose members were concerned about homelessness in the city, so bought a house to offer transitional housing for women with children needing time to get on their feet. SW-A noted that the counseling center came as a result of the congregation's vision for meeting the personal and emotional needs of people in his congregation. SW-A also recognizes the importance of understanding the needs of the larger community they serve, and continues to assess what the needs are and how they might serve the area better.

All the literature that spoke about the church, or models churches used for outreach and illustrated Christian concern for the needy (Bailey, 1993; Carlson, 2001; Garland, 2002; McRoberts, 19999; Larkin, 1983; Tirrito, 2000; Troeltsch, 1949). SW-A talked about an older woman who wanted to come to a group they were offering, but needed transportation. He wanted to find a way to get her there, noting that she was isolated and needed to be with people. In the literature, Bailey (1988) commented, "when it is discovered that older women in the neighborhood are isolated, a church volunteer invites the women to a quilting group and there she finds friends; this utilizes group social work approaches and methods" (Bailey, 1988, p. 62).

The literature reviewed clearly showed that, historically, churches and synagogues provided social ministry and were very involved in the social fabric of the community. (Magnuson, 1977; Manthey, 1989; Hugen, 1998). Though the literature

indicated that churches are involved in the social fabric of their communities, it was interesting that this researcher was only able to locate four, licensed church social workers. Unfortunately it holds true that professional social workers are not finding employment in the church. Much of the literature referred to service work done by volunteers, and pastors (Abbott, et al., 1990; Brown, 1997; Carlson, 2001; McRoberts, 1999; Miller, 2000; Munke-Pittman, 1999; Jones, 1998; Jonker & Koopman, 2000). A small amount of literature referred to work carried out by professional social workers (Bailey, 1993; Garland, 1992; Morgan, 1983; Tirrito, 2000).

The finding of this research, that church social workers' role definition is shaped by other factors in the environment such as the clientele or vision of the church, has not been explored much in the literature. The clientele or vision of the church is defined by its culture. Though it is evident that each church forms its own cultural with unique language and cultural patterns, Garland (1992) was the only author in the literature who talked about the church as a cultural group. This church culture will effect the ease with which a social worker will be able to integrate into the setting; as the context of our work can become either a barrier, or a resource for change. Where we are located can and does affect what we do and the job satisfaction we experience. It was interesting to note that Garland's (1992) article, written about church social work, included ten references and five references referred back to articles authored by Garland. This reiterates the point that few authors have given the subject of church culture much thought.

It was clear from this research, that models found from interviewing church social workers were also found in the literature. Three of the four social workers interviewed talked about using Christian mentors to meet the varied and ongoing needs of their

clients. SW-A uses mentors to walk alongside clients who were dealing with ongoing issues such as divorce, death, alcoholism, etc. SW-B involves a team of mentors for the single families she is case manager for. SW-D was sensing a need to involve people in the lives of her clients to pray for them. The literature noted many examples of various churches using mentors to walk and work alongside others who were in situations similar to events they were experiencing. This was done to give encouragement, hope and a helping hand (Bailey, 1993; Hugen, 1998; Haight, 1998; Jonker, et al, 2000; Tapias, 1994; Staral, 1995).

The other models social workers interviewed for this research use were also noted in the literature. All of the literature that refers to church social work mentions the use of religious symbols, of some kind. Sometimes it may have been visits by the pastor, prayers by someone in the congregation, or Christmas or Easter celebrations for the clients. Whatever it was, the user felt that what they were doing was providing meaning and hope for the client. The social workers interviewed use religious symbols of various kinds such as: prayer, Bible reading, pastoral visits, Christmas and Easter celebrations, personal faith sharing and even Christian art on the walls (Brown, 1997; Bailey, 1993, 1988; Boris & Steuerle, 1999; Garland, 1992; McRoberts, 1999; Munke-Pittman, 1999; Netting, 1984; Jones, 1998; Larkin, 1983; Magnuson, 1977; Tirrito, 2000). All the workers interviewed, refer clients to other agencies when it is appropriate. All the social workers interviewed for this research also place a high value on understanding Maslow's hierarchy and utilizing it in practice. SW-A referred to meeting the needs of clients on a continuum of care model, from meeting the basic need some may have for food, to a higher level of a need for spiritual growth. SW-B is happy to help clients with

understanding basic paperwork for welfare or how to buy a house. SW-C "wished" that she would be able to help people with all of their basic needs. SW-D noted the fact that some clients were not able to dream until the first level of food and shelter was securely in place. The literature was also clear on the importance of offering clients what they need for the moment and then empowering them to move to the next level. Carlson, (2001) offered examples of churches offering: job training, proper clothes for job interviews, transitional housing, education on buying your own home, parenting, nutrition and much, much more. Several authors in the literature reviewed elaborated on this model; though Maslow was never referred to specifically (Bailey, 1993; Brown, 1997; Carlson; Staral, 1999; Garland, 1992).

Limitations of Research Methods

Limitations in the research methods used involve the selection of participants and the small sample size. This researcher did not realize the number of church social workers would be so limited. The names of Mainline and Evangelical Protestant churches were drawn from the yellow pages. From these calls six church social workers were identified, two proved not to qualify during the interview. One subject came through a referral from one of the social workers called. A fellow student at Augsburg College gave another subject's name to this researcher. These subjects all received a personal phone call using the telephone script (Appendix B), and a letter describing the study, along with the informed consent. These procedures were in accordance with IRB protocol.

The open-ended interview style used can cause difficulties. The interviews themselves were open elaboration by the subject's, and it was not always clear to the researcher if the topic they were discussing was relevant. When one of the social workers

spent a lot of time dialoging about his vision for the counseling center, it wasn't clear how this fit, with another worker who described her job in terms of making sure the clients kept the rules. Though very different discussions, both of these interviews contained themes that related to how these social workers experienced the environment shaping their role.

The time constraints on this study limited the work that could have been done. Had this been a dissertation, IRB could have been consulted for a change in the protocol. The National Association of Christian Social Workers may have concented to releasing a list of church social workers in the Twin Cities area (if one exists), possibly resulting in more interviews. The study could also have been broadened to include the entire state of Minnesota, or other states as well.

Other limitations were: *provincialism*, which is interpreting what people say or do from our own worldview, or from our own theological framework resulting in limitations. Given the fact that this researcher is Lutheran and all the workers interviewed were Lutheran, provincialism may have resulted without this researcher being aware of it. This researcher also worked against, *going native*, or not maintaining an objective focus while doing research. This researcher became aware that maintaining an objective focus is always a challenge and proved to be so in this research, though care was taken to attempt objectivity. *Questionable cause* and *hasty conclusions* can also be a downfall, therefore it's important to not jump to a conclusion but to ask the tough question. Did something else cause this outcome? This researcher sought to ask the tough question, but is not sure the tough question was always asked. Appropriately so, *false dilemma*, is another pitfall that was watched for in this study. It could be easy to select one opinion out of several

and give the false impression that there was only one way to view the issue, when in fact there may have been several. Though an attempt to avoid this dilemma was watched for, some opinions may have been invalidated unknowingly (Kahane, 1992, as cited in Rubin and Babbie, 2001)

Implications for Social Work Practice

Any discussion of the implications of these findings needs to keep in mind the limitations of the study. The implications are tied to context and need to be understood in that light.

Church social work in areas that are more rural or remote, or in another state, may find differences in church social worker roles, definitions and use of models. Social workers in rural areas may have fewer choices for referrals to outside resources, or may not grapple with urban issues such as homelessness. Workers in rural or remote areas may find that their role is even more critical when dealing with the wholistic needs of help seekers. However, the implications derived from this study, for professional social work, are seen as valid. The implications for professional social work practice are:

1. Social work education.
2. Clergy education.
3. Ongoing support and education for church social workers.

Social work education.

Smith (1999) speaks of the necessity for training social workers to be aware of the role of religion and the church in the fabric of our communities. Being able to differentiate between various religious viewpoints is important for social workers in

general, and is imperative for church social workers. As vital as it is that social workers understand and respect other religions, Zacharias (2002) says,

> The certainty is this: America was not founded on an Islamic, Hindu, or Buddhist worldview, however valuable some of their precepts might be. If we do not see this, we do not see the fundamental ideas that shaped the ethos of the American people. (p. 28)

When training church social workers, though it is important to understand eastern religions and other faiths, diversity training should include an understanding of historical and theological differences of church bodies and spiritual development. Church social work also requires specific theological understanding of the church they are working in. Social work students, who are familiar with religious language and symbols used by the church at large, will likely be less uncomfortable dialoguing with clients, concerning their faith questions or spiritual dilemmas. The appropriate use of the church as a referral source for social workers should also be included in curriculum. Social work students able to gain a basic understanding of these differences, would be better equipped to dialogue with pastors and educate the church concerning community needs. The education social workers receive should reflect this diversity and creativity (Bailey, 1993; Garland, 1992).

Because Christian social ministries can be a caring connection between the local church and the community, social work students need to know that there are models useful for integrating both profession and faith into their work. This training needs to be incorporated into curriculum at schools of social work. Familiarity with poor neighborhoods, its uniqueness and its needs is important in order for social workers to lead the church into community ministries. Social workers need to learn how to assess the needs of a community and its diverse population. Taking the classroom onto the streets

could help develop an understanding of the urban setting. Curriculum should be designed that would be flexible and could adjust to the constantly changing needs of the city (Conn & Ortiz, 2001).

From this research and the diversity found in the literature, it is clear that a workable model, in one context, cannot always be transferred to another. Therefore, social work education should include the skills of choosing and adjusting a model for the framework of a particular community or church setting. However, in order to effectively administer the use of any model, there will be a large need to recruit volunteers. Training in the classroom to educate social workers to recognize the unique talents of church members and community friends, would be valuable when volunteers are needed to design an effective program in the church.

Clergy education.

It was clear from this research that the gifts of social work which could empower the congregation, and its community, is not happening very often, as only four church social workers were located. This could be connected to the researcher's hypothesis that clergy do not recognize the value of professionals educated in social work and what it could mean for the growth and maturity of their congregation.

Pastors need the support a church social worker could provide. Too often clergy spend valuable time on needs that are a natural part of ministry, but because of time constraints they can only offer a partial solution. If pastors could realize the advantage of having a social worker on staff to: advocate for individuals, provide worship leadership, educational presentations, writing for specialized publications and training and working

with volunteers to meet the needs of the community; they may then be willing to consider hiring a social worker (Garland, 2002; Smith, 1982).

In order for Churches to recognize how valuable the role of a professional social worker could be, in connecting to the community and the mission of the church; the clergy must be educated. Garland (2002) writes,

> Social work's knowledge of family and community systems could shape the development of congregational family and community ministries. Social work's knowledge and theory about advocacy and empowerment could increase the efficacy of the church's prophetic voice in a society consumed by consumerism and blatant in its oppression of immigrants and the poor: Social work's knowledge of how values are formed, how behavior is shaped, and how individuals change their life direction could inform and sharpen the church's approaches to disciplining Christians and challenging our culture. Social work's knowledge of conflict resolution could reshape the conflicts within the church into opportunities for transformation rather than painful splintering. Social work's strength perspective could inform the assessment of the gifts and resources of congregations for ministry. (p. 4)

"Band-Aid" relief offered by the church in years past, to families needing help, is no longer sufficient to meet the needs of those in our communities. Assistance to help people escape from their poverty is now crucial, but in order for churches to achieve this level of care, professional staff need to be added that can assess the presenting problems of an individual and work with them to address their concerns. Social work practice can offer excellent help in: developing ministries, knowledge about the use of the strength's perspective and empowerment, while offering insight into resolving conflicts and using the gifts of individuals that may be otherwise overlooked (Carlson, 2001: Garland, 2002).

Church social work is a muti-facited vocation, requiring knowledge of theory, theology and church culture, with a specific need for personal and professional qualifications in leadership. Clergy should recognize that not every social worker has the

qualifications to be a church leader. Hence, clergy education, in regard to the contribution and selection of social workers for the church setting, is crucial (Larkin, 1979).

The implementation of clergy education could be addressed by: offering joint discussion forums for clergy and social work students, writing professional articles on church and social work for leading Christian periodicals and denominational publications, sending mailings to clergy on the availability of student interns, in conjunction with neighborhood agencies (those having an MSW on staff), or presentations at synodical conventions on the benefits of including a social worker on the church staff.

Ongoing support and education.

Another element noted in this study, was the sense of isolation felt by church social workers. This was due, in part, to the small number of social workers found in a church setting. Like other church leaders, church social workers need support and encouragement to love the church and work in it as a host congregation. However, working in the church involves unique issues, politics, personal conflicts, and isolation of the leadership. All these factors can be a cause for stress and job dissatisfaction, if not understood. Church social workers need to find a supportive environment that can understand these issues and help them deal with their concerns.

Church social workers also need education and ongoing training for further knowledge of the Bible, theology, church history, spiritual life and leadership. Because church social workers also need to be educators, training should be offered to enhance their ability to preach/speak to congregations, or write for church newsletters and Christian periodicals. Seminars could be presented on topics such as: spiritually sensitive

assessment tools for church social work practice, a Christian perspective on poverty, conflicts between Christianity and social work, diversity, ethical decision making for social workers in church social work practice, boundary issues and church social work, etc. The only forum that presently addresses some of these concerns is The National Association of Christian Social Workers (NACSW). Because this organization is not known by many whom may benefit from it, information should be available at social work schools around the nation. The NACSW has been a Christian presence in social work since 1950. They are a source of information for Christian social workers such as: books, a newsletter (Catalyst), member interest groups that promote discussion, sharing information and pooling resources, providing professional understanding and help for social ministries of the church, offering a chatroom and audio conference on-line, a speakers' bureau, and yearly local and national conventions.

Recommendations for Further Research

Because service delivery is not about us as professionals, but about those we serve, it could be important to do a study that asks those served by churches if their needs were provided for in an acceptable way. Would they have used this service if it had not been connected with a church? Did receiving services through a church create any barriers for them? Because the service they received was connected with a church, did that fact imply higher quality or trustworthiness? Did this faith-based organization provide different or better services than a secular agency would have? Did they feel heard, did they feel safe? What would further contribute to their quality of life?

Further research that might also be helpful could be, understanding how clergy view the knowledge and role of social work professionals. What are clergy perspectives

and experiences in dealing with social workers? How do clergy feel social work could best help the mission of the church? Approaching clergy with these questions may be important in developing educational curriculum for social work students.

Research could be carried out with students that have graduated, to measure how well they felt their training prepared them to work in a church setting, or how well they were prepared to understand the precepts of Christianity and the diversity of other religions as well. Then simultaneously, schools of social work across the nation could be compared, inquiring what coursework is being offered to prepare students for church employment.

Because visioning appeared to be a very empowering role definition, it would seem important to do research in this area. Are clergy controlling and defining the role of social workers on staff so they are unable to define their role, or encouraging them to be involved with visioning for the church?

There are many related areas that haven't been sufficiently studied. All these and more could add to the empowerment and education of social workers and the betterment of the church and community.

Summary.

The purpose of this research was to begin to form an idea of church social workers' perception of their role, the nature of their experiences, and models used by them in the church. That objective has been accomplished within the time frame, methods and resources available for this study. The discussion of implications focuses on the areas of professional social work that are affected by this study. Those possible areas included: a higher level of skills(achieved through education) for clergy and social workers, and a

greater appreciation for the complex work social workers do, or could accomplish in church settings.

In order to be able to facilitate this connection, it is necessary that social workers understand the need to promote justice and love in social reform and service. It is this researcher's hope, that further study could develop a workable model that would strengthen the church, and its community ministries, to promote love and justice. Integrating social work with the mission of the church has broad implications for urban ministries. A disservice is done to the church and to social work, when their missions are not seen as congruent with one another. Much training and education for both sides (clergy & social workers) is imperative to enhance congruence. Let it be understood that social work must not take over the church, nor should social work be seen as a means to control its members or simply as a vehicle to work in the neighborhood. Garland (1998) says it well, "Social service and social action are not ends in themselves; they must always be securely anchored in and reflective of the church's mission" (p. 14).

To this end we must work.

References

Abbott, D. S., Garland, D. R., Huffman-Nevins, A., & Boatwright Stewart, J. (1990). Social Work & Christianity, 17, (1), 7-16.

Boesch, E. (1991). Symbolic action theory and cultural psychology. Germany: Springer-Verlag.

Brown, P. A. (1997). Coffee & Doughnuts. The Other Side, 33, (4), 12-17.

Bailey, P. L. (1993). Social work practice with groups in the church context: A family life ministry model in an inner-city church. New York: Haworth Press.

Bailey, P. L. (1988). Southern baptist programs of church social work. Review & Expositor, 85, (2), 285-290.

Biestek, F. P. (1956). Religion in social casework. The Social Welfare Forum, 56, 80-88.

Bogdan, R., & Taylor, S. (1975). Introduction to qualitative research methods. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Boris, E. & Steuerle, E. (1999). What charities cannot do. The Christian Science Monitor (electronic Ed.). http://www.urban.org/news/press/boris_steuerle100199.html

Carlson, D. (Ed.). (2001). The welfare of my neighbor: Living out christ's love for the poor. Washington, D.C.: Family Research Council

Center for Public Justice. A guide to charitable choice: The rules of section 104 of the 1996 federal welfare law governing state cooperation with faith based social-service providers.World Wide Web: http: / /worldview-bbs.com/-cpjustice/Cguide/Guide.html.

Charon, J. M. (1995). Symbolic Interactionism an introduction, an interpretation, an integration. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Derezotes, D. R. (2000). Spirituality and religiosity: Neglected factors in social work practice. Arete, 20, (1), 1-15.

Ellis, A. (1993). The advantages and disadvantages of self-help therapy. Professional and Psychology: Research and Practice, 24, (3), 335-339.

Garland, D. S. (2002). What about the church in the integration of faith and practice? Ponderings from a Texas road trip. Catalyst, 45, 4.

Garland, D. S. (Ed.). (1992). Church social work: Helping the whole person in the context of the church. St Davids, PA: North American Association of Christians in Social Work.

Glaser, B. G. (1992). Basics of grounded theory analysis. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory. Chicago: Aldine.

Haight, W. L. (1998). "Gathering the spirit at first baptist church: Spirit as a protective factor in the lives of alcoholic anonymous children. Social Work, 43, (3), 213-221.

Hugen, B. (Ed.). (1998). Christianity and social work: Readings on the integration of christian faith and social work practice. Botsford, CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work.

Hodge, D. R. (2000). Spirituality: Towards a theoretical framework. Social Thought, 19, (4), 1-16.

Jones, A. (1998). In this lush suburb, they 'beat the bushes' for people to serve: South pasadena, california, parish helps homeless. Nathional Catholic Reporter, 35, (9), 1-3.

Jonker, P. H., & Koopman, D. L. (2000). Volunteer mentors in social welfare: Who they are and what happens when they mentor. Social Work & Christianity, 27, (2), 168-187.

Kahane, H. (1992). Logic and contemporary rhetoric, (2nd Ed). Belmont, CA: Wasworth.

Kronic, J. C. (1989). Toward a formal methodology of document analysis in the interpretive tradition." Paper presented at the meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society, Baltimore, MD.

Larkin, M. T. (1983). The church as the work place for social work. Social Work & Christianity, 10, (1), 54-60.

Lowenberg, F. M. (1988). Religion and social work practice in contemporary american society. New York: Columbia University Press.

Linthicum, R. (2001). Building heaven and erecting hell: The Bible on economic, political and religious systems and their people. Social Policy, Summer, 34-41.

Magnuson, N. (1977). Salvation in the slums: Evangelical social work 1865-1920. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

Manthey, B. J. (1989). Social work, religion and the church: Policy Implications. Dissertation Abstracts International, 8920773. (University Microfilms: Ann Arbor, MI).

McRoberts, O. M. (1999). Understanding the "new" black pentecostal activism: Lessons from ecumenical urban ministries in boston. Sociology of Religion, 60, (1), 47-70.

Miller, M. (2000). Community organizing: Lost among christians? Social Policy, 33, (1), 34-40.

Munke-Pittman, P. (1999). A different rootstock: The Lutheran contribution to the development of professional social work prior to 1917. Social Work & Christianity, 26, (1), 40-59.

Netting, E. F. (1984). Church-related agencies and social welfare. Social Service Review, 84, 404-419.

Niebuhr, R. (1932). The contribution of religion to social work. New York: Columbia University Press.

Olasky, M. (2000). Compassionate conservatism: What it is, what it does, and how it can transform america. New York: The Free Press.

United States Government. (2001). Economic report of the president (January). Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office.

Primus, W. (2001). What next for welfare reform? Brookings Review, (Summer), 19, 3-16.

Reamer F. G. (1998). Ethical standards in social work: A critical review of the NASW code of ethics. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Ressler, L. 1998). When social work and christianity conflict. In B. Hugen (Ed.), Christianity and social work (pp.165-186). Botsford, CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work.

Rubin, A. & Babbie E. (2001). Research methods for social work. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Shelly, B., L. (1995). Church history in plain language. Dallas: Word.

Sherman, A. L. (1996). Stepping out on faith and off welfare: How a city ministry rescues the perishing from poverty and drugs. Christianity Today, 40 (7), 35-36.

Sherman, A. L. (2000). Tracking charitable choice: A study of the collaboration between faith-based organizations and the government in providing social services in nine states. Social Work & Christianity, 27, (2), 112-129.

Smith, J. P. 1999). Holy ground, common ground: Perspective of christian clergy on their mental health role. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, 1999). Dissertation Abstracts International.

Smith, M. L. & Sebesta, R. J. (1982). The church as a social welfare agency. Social work & Christianity, 13, (1), 26-35.

Staral, J. M. (1995). Signs of hope and struggle: Action research in a racially-mixed central city church. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1995). Dissertation Abstracts International.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research: Grounded Theory procedures and techniques. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Tapias, A. (1994). Healing our mean streets. Christianity Today, 38 (8), 46-49.

Taylor, L. (2002).The church of O. Christianity Today, 46, (4), 39-45.

Taylor S. J., & Bogdan, R.(1984). Introduction to qualitative research methods, 2nd edition. New York: Wiley.

The principles of christian community development. Christian Community Development Association [on-line], Available: http://www.ccda.org/principles.html

Thomas, D. E. (1967). Social work and Christian vocation. Dissertation Abstracts International, 68-266. (University Microfilms: Ann Arbor, MI).

Tirrito, T. (2000). The spirit of collaboration: Social work / the church / older adults. Social Thought, 19, (3), 59-75.

Trattner. W. I. (1994). From poor law to welfare state: A history of social welfare in America (5th ed.). New York: The Free Press.

Troeltsch, E. (1949). The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches (Vol 2). London: Geroge Allen & Unwin LTD.

United States Government (2001). Economic report of the president (January). Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office.

Appendix A

Diagram of Research Model

Question or hypothesis

⇓

Pretest questionnaire

⇓

Open-ended interviews

⇓

Perceive common pattern

⇓

Re-interview participants, via phone

⇓

Modify hypothesis

⇓

Data analysis

Appendix B

Script

This is the dialogue guideline that will be used for phone conversations, to seek out prospective participants and set up a time for interviews.

"Hello, my name is LuAnn Hanson, I am an MSW student at Augsburg College. I am writing a thesis entitled, towards an understanding of church social work. Therefore, I am interested in interviewing social workers that are presently employed by a church. I would like to find out about your work and what types of ministry you are involved in. My purpose for calling you today is to see if you would be willing to set up an interview with me for this research? Our total time together would involve an interview session of approximately one hour and another phone call, sometime after the interview, for clarification purposes. Would this be something you would be willing to assist me with?

(If they agree to an interview)

A copy of my interview guide will be sent to you so you have ample time to consider the questions I have. I will also include the consent form so you can review it. Questions about the form can be addressed at our first interview.

(A discussion of a convenient location will ensue and a meeting spot will be decided on)

Thanks so much for your time. I am looking forward to meeting you. If you need to call me to change the date or time, I can be reached at (612) 866-5487. Thank-you."

Appendix C

Towards an understanding of church social work
Consent form

You were selected as a possible participant because your perspective on church social work is valuable. I ask that you read this form over and ask any questions that arise.

Background Information:
I am conducting this thesis research as part of my Master's of Social Work degree at Augsburg College.

The goal of this study is to see how church social workers perceive their role and what kinds of models they use to carry out their programs to the community they find themselves in.

Procedures:
Each interview will take approximately one hour and you will also receive a follow-up phone call to verify my interpretation of the interview data.

Risks and Benefits of Being in this Study:
There are no risks. All names and places will be changed and your name will not be used in any published information. You will remain anonymous to the public.

There are no direct benefits (i.e., money or gifts) to participants. A copy of the thesis will be available to you upon request. The Augsburg College Library will have a bound copy of the thesis.

There are indirect benefits that, I hope, will result from this research project. Very little has been written describing the work done by the professional church social worker. More information on the role of church social workers could be helpful to churches wanting to hire a social worker.

Confidentiality and Anonymity:
All information is confidential but the researcher cannot guarantee anonymity due to the small sample size planned for. However, I will make every effort to maintain confidentiality. Information that could identify you to another person (a specific situation, your name, or your initials) will not be included in any published information. All research, which may consist of tapes, transcripts of these tapes and handwritten notes, will be kept confidential to me as the researcher.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Should you decide to not participate, your future relationships with your employer, or Augsburg College will not be affected.

You are free to withdraw at any time and may skip any questions asked and still remain in the study.

Contacts and Questions:
The person conducting this study is LuAnn Hanson. You may ask any questions now, or after the interview is over by calling me at (612) 866-5487, or e-mailing me at drhanson@usfamily.net. You may also contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Sharon Patten at (612) 330-17223.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and consent to participate in this study.

Signature _____

Date _____

I consent to be audiotaped, to enable the interview to be transcribed.

Signature _____

Date _____

I consent to the use of quotations in the final thesis, without the use of my name or initials.

Signature _____

Date _____

I consent to a follow-up phone call for clarification on interview data.

Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix D

Interview Guide

These questions can be omitted, or adapted, to fit the flow of the interview and are only a guide to conversation.

1. What is your history as a social worker?
   a. Are you licensed as a social worker, at what level and what degree do you hold?
   b. How long have you worked as a church social worker?
   c. How long have you been employed at this church as a social worker?
   d. Have you worked as a social worker at any other organization or agency other than the church? If yes, what agency and what was your position?

2. How do you see your role in the church?
   a. How do you see yourself as a social change agent? (please bring some examples for our interview).
   b. How do you see your role as a representative for the members of the congregation?
   c. How is your role the same as other social work professionals in the community?
   d. How does your role differ from other social work professionals working in the community?
   e. What is your involvement with, or how do you coordinate services with other social workers in the community?

3. How do you view your connection to the community?
   a. How would you define the community you are serving?
   b. Which social problems do you deal with in your community?
   c. What dreams and visions do you have for your work in the community?
   d. Do you have any affiliations, or associations that you receive support from?

4. How do you use volunteers in carrying out your work?
   a. What are the roles and responsibilities of your volunteers?
   b. How are volunteers obtained and retained?
   c. What kind of training do they receive?
   d. What difficulties have you encountered with the use of volunteers?

5. What, if any, model do you use to guide your work in the church (eco-systems, family systems, community model, etc.)?
   a. How does your view of Scripture fit with your work and understanding of your choice of model?
   b. How does the church structure impact the work you do?
   c. Does the psychodynamic model of individual pathology impact the thinking of your church and, or affect your work in the church?
   d. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your work?